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SPINOZA
IN THE LIGHT OF THE VEDĀNTA



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SPINOZA

in the Light of the Vedānta

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First Edition : 1957.

**CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL
LIBRARY, NEW DELHI.**

Acc. No. 36115
Date 25-7-62
Vol. No. 199.492
T. No. Tri

Printed by :

P. N. Bhargava,

Bhargava Bhushan Press, Varanasi-1

त्वदीयं वस्तु गुरुदेव तुभ्यमेव समर्पये

Recd from Mr. P. P. Ram Chandra Lal, Delhi on 10.4.82
for Rs. 12.00



FOREWORD

Although Spinoza did not initiate a new tradition, as Śankara did, his philosophy has continued to exercise considerable influence on modern thought. Philosophers have been attracted to him by the depth as well as the boldness of his thought. Some of his conclusions were too radical and challenging to be accepted without modification or criticism. The literature on Spinoza is vast and varied and books have been written on him from every conceivable standpoint. Idealists and absolutists as well as materialists and naturalists have tried, with varying degrees of success, to appropriate his philosophy to their own. What is new and remarkable in the present work is that it is a study of Spinoza from a predominantly Indian, Vedānta, point of view.

It may be asked whether an interpretation of Spinoza from a tradition so far removed from him as the Vedānta could be authentic historically. Could it reasonably be expected to discover the inner meaning of the philosopher ? Dr. Tripathi does indeed correct, at many places, the errors and shortcomings in previous interpretations of Spinozistic doctrines and succeeds in presenting a more consistent and pleasing picture. I do not think however that Dr. Tripathi's work is an historical study claiming to lay bare the make-up of Spinoza's mind. It is essentially an essay in comparative philosophy, and must be judged as such. He frankly proposes an emendation of Spinoza in the light of Śankara. Accepting Spinoza's conception of Substance (God) and his notion of Causality as mandatorially

defining his philosophy, Dr. Tripathi shows that many, if not most, of the inconsistencies in Spinoza could be remedied by the Vedāntic (Advaitic) interpretation.

"The most revolutionary change that Spinoza introduced *was not in the conception of God, but in the conception of God's causality.*" (P. 129.) . This is true in the case of Śankara also. Both reject the transeunt causality of God (Brahman) and affirm Immanence. At the same time, they would not countenance, even in a small measure, the modification of God into things of the world, His finitisation into phenomena; His Transcendence is equally vital. These two seemingly irreconcilable requirements are implied in the concept of Free Appearance (Vivartavāda) in the Vedānta. The world of phenomena freely emerges from the Universal Ground of Substance (Brahman) and does not in any way modify it. The modes indicate God (Brahman) without constituting an integral part of Him. Dr. Tripathi argues with great skill and persuasion that a significant interpretation of Spinoza should be on these lines.

The unequivocal acceptance of this interpretation results in a proper appraisal of the characteristic Spinozistic doctrines of Attributes, Modes and of Human Bondage and Freedom. This is expounded by the author in successive chapters in a telling manner with commendable acumen and insight. It is not claimed that Spinoza himself would agree in all the details of the interpretation. This is however a way in which he could be made more consistent and significant.

Dr. Tripathi's analytic and critical study of Spinoza constitutes, in my opinion, an outstanding contri-

bution to comparative philosophy. In the present-day context of the world when nations and cultures are coming closely together, such studies have topical value. May I express the hope that many more studies of this nature would be undertaken by scholars.

The publication of this work has been made possible under the Government of India Scheme for the promotion of Research and Publication in Humanities in the First Five Year Plan. Our grateful thanks are due to them for this help. Our deep thanks are also due to the authorities of this University for sanctioning the commencement of a series of publications in philosophy and religion entitled the *Banaras Hindu University Darśana Series*. This book is the First volume in the above Series.

T. R. V. Murti

General Editor

B. H. U. Darśana Series.

PREFACE

Recent publications on Spinoza falsify the view that everything worth saying on Spinoza has already been said. Spinozism, like Advaitism, because of its great spiritual flavour, will continue to inspire students of philosophy for all time. Spinoza's peculiar absolutism with its doctrine of Attributes, the parallelism of Thought and Extension, his determinism, and not the least, his concept of the intellectual love of God provide perennial interest. The war-weary western world is also philosophy-weary, and we believe that the Vedānta is a cure for both. At a time when interest in the Vedānta is growing in the west, we take the opportunity of presenting Spinozism as a kind of western Vedānta. It is hoped that this form of the Vedānta will be found more congenial to the western mind.

The spiritual earnestness of Spinoza makes him a favourite of the Indian student. But surprisingly enough no Indian student has so far offered a systematic treatment of Spinozism. In the west, Spinozism has attracted the attention of a variety of schools of thought. He has been condemned, he has been sympathised with and admired too. But it is disappointing to find that much in Spinoza has been missed and much has been mistaken, not a little by his admirers. This is perhaps due to the fact that the western mind generally is unable to extricate itself from certain habits of thought. One is particularly provoked by such observations as 'the last word of Spinoza is a contradiction of the first'.

The general handicap of the western scholars seems to be their obsession with the empirical. The western

mind, idealist or realist, cannot reject the empirical as false, and hence its constant anxiety to accommodate, nay, to pay homage to, the empirical. The empirical presses itself for recognition sometimes on behalf of religion, sometimes on behalf of philosophy, and very often on on behalf of morality. A doze of Advaitism should therefore prove wholesome. This is our apology for this presentation. Advaitism disabuses our mind of the above obsessions. Moreover, it provides us with weapons to vindicate the fundamental doctrines of Spinoza, such as the absolutistic view of substance, the causality of substance, the doctrine of Attributes and the conception of bondage and freedom.

Our endeavour in this study has been mainly to establish Spinozism as the absolutism of the Advaitic type. When so understood, many criticisms of Spinoza seem out of place, and many misinterpretations are easily exposed. It has been emphasised here that if the conception of substance (which is the pivot of Spinoza's philosophy) as absolutely indeterminate self-evident Being is strictly adhered to, all other doctrines will inevitably follow. The subjective nature of attributes and the consequent unreality of modes will appear as necessary corollaries, and creation will reduce itself to false appearance (*vivarta*). It will further be evident that the ethics of Spinoza is as closely related to his epistemology as the latter is to his metaphysics. For Spinoza, the the goal of life is not mere morality, but spirituality or freedom born of true knowledge, the knowledge of our ultimate identity with the Absolute. This may appear to be a difficult thesis to maintain particularly in the face of some statements of Spinoza. But

it is hoped that the general trend of Spinoza's thought and his all-important maxim *omnis determinatio est negatio* will bear out our interpretation.

The literature on Spinoza in English is sufficiently rich to provide us with the typical interpretations of Spinoza in the west and so we have used only that. Texts used have been indicated under Abbreviations and a select bibliography has been given at the end. References to Advaitism have been made only regarding its general doctrines, and hence it has been documented only where necessary.

A word of apology is due to the readers and reviewers of the book. Apart from other short-comings of the book, there is one of which the author is painfully conscious and which he regrets deeply. The number of misprints is inexcusably great. A list of select errata has been no doubt attached, but a good many minor misprints (such as diacritical marks, punctuation marks, omission and transposition of letters in words, mingling up of words, italics, capital letters etc.) which can easily be detected, have been left to be corrected by readers themselves.

As the present work is concerned mainly with the examination of Spinoza's philosophy, no systematic account of his life is given. But an analysis of his personality and its relevance to his philosophy has been attempted. For the same reason, a detailed examination of the philosophies that are likely to have influenced Spinoza has not been undertaken. That might even obscure the standpoint of this essay.

It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge my great indebtedness to my revered teacher, Professor. T. R. V.

Murti. My obligations to him are, indeed, more than what can adequately be acknowledged. It has been my great privilege to be his student ever since I joined the Banaras Hindu University, and even after leaving it. I owe to him, I may say with pride, all my interest and orientation in philosophy. He has been kind to me in many ways of which mention cannot be made here. In particular, I have discussed almost the whole work with him, and if there is anything of some value in this book it is due to his help and guidance. In addition, this book has passed through his hands as the Editor of Darśana Research Publications. But I must hasten to add that the short-comings of the book (which are not a few) are exclusively due to my limitations. With all its imperfections, the book is gratefully dedicated to him as a token of gratitude and love, *Guru-dakṣiṇā*.

As Sayaji Rao Gaekwad Fellow (1944-47), it was my privilege to work for my D. Litt. degree under the able guidance of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the then Vice-Chancellor of the Banaras Hindu University. This book is a modified form of my doctoral thesis. I, therefore, place on record my gratitude to Professor Radhakrishnan. To be able to associate oneself with a man of his eminence is really a great fortune. But there may be much in this book which is not worthy of his guidance and I beg to be pardoned for that. In this connection, I am glad to mention my obligations to the examiners of my thesis whose criticisms and suggestions have helped me a good deal in improving the book.

My thanks are due, in no small measure, to my revered teacher Dr. S. K. Maitra, Honorary University

Professor, Banaras Hindu University who recommended me for the Gaekwad Fellowship, and who has always evinced great interest in my research and has helped me in many ways.

I express my gratitude to all my teachers, friends and well-wishers who have been helpful to me in this endeavour and whose names I am not able to mention. I am particularly thankful to Dr. Prabhakar Trivedi, Sri K. Sivaraman, Sri K. P. Mukerjee and Mr. A .J. Alston for their friendly help. Many of the printing errors were pointed out by Sri Mukerjee and Mr. Alston.

In the end, I thank the members of the Darśana Research Committee who have kindly selected my thesis for publication.

August, 1957.

R. K. Tripathi

CONTENTS

	Page
The Editor's Foreword.	i
The Author's Preface.	iv
Abbreviations.	xi
Errata	xiii
I. The Right Approach to Spinoza
The Nature of Philosophic Consciousness—Philosophy and Religion—Philosophy and its Method
II. The Right Approach to Spinoza (Contd.)	36
Philosophy and History—The Spiritual Rank of Spinoza—Spinoza and the Jewish Rationalists—Minor Influences—Spinoza and Descartes—Spinoza's Originality.	
III. Substance	68
Spinozism is Absolutism—The Form of Presentation—The Definition of Substance—Proofs of God's Existence—The Properties of Substance—The Deduction of God's Properties—Substance is Transcendent—Substance is Pure Being—The Vedāntic Conception of Brahman—The Dialectic of the Vedānta—Misinterpretations of Substance.	
IV. Substance (Contd.)	122
The Causality of the Absolute—Spinoza's View of divine Causality—God is the Immanent Cause—Denial of Will in God—Denial of Teleology—The Meaning of God's Freedom—God as Conscious Cause.	
V. Attributes.	154
Why are the Attributes Introduced?—The Doctrine of Attributes—An Examination of the Objective Interpretation of Attributes—The Subjective Interpretation of Attributes—Is Eternity an Attribute of God?— <i>Natura Naturans</i> and <i>Íśvara</i> —A. Is the Concept of <i>Íśvara</i> Superfluous? B. The Personality of <i>Íśvara</i> .	

VI. Modes	197
Are the Attributes Dynamic?—The Evolution of Modes —The Problem of Individuation—The Nature of Finite Modes—The Status of the Finite Modes.	
VII. The Human Mind	217
The General Nature of Man—The Human Mind and Body—The Denial of Free Will—The Denial of Interaction—The Idea-Ideae—The Doctrine of Truth and Falsity—Grades of Knowledge—A. Imagina- tion B. Reason C. Intuition.	
VIII. Bondage and Freedom	252
The Spiritual Attitude—Analysis of Emotions—Laws of Emotions—Active Emotions—The Strength of Emotions—The Nature of Human Bondage—The Possibility of Freedom—The Power of the Intellect— Life of Reason or Virtue.	
IX. The Eternity of Man	291
<i>Amor Intellectualis Dei</i> (its genesis)— <i>Amor Intellectualis</i> (its characteristics)—The Eternity of Mind— Survival and After.	
C o n c l u s i o n	314
Glossary of Sanskrit Terms	323
Select Bibliography	326
I n d e x	330

ABBREVIATIONS

Aeternitas	for <i>Aeternitas</i> (A Spinozistic Study) by H. F. Hallett, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1930.
Alexander	„ <i>Spinoza and Time</i> by S. Alexander, George Allen and Unwin., 1927.
r. Up.	„ <i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad</i> .
B. S. B.	„ <i>Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya</i> .
Caird	„ <i>Spinoza</i> by John Caird. Blackwood's Phi- losophical Classics.
Cogitata	„ Spinoza's <i>Cogitata Metaphysica</i> Tr. by H. H. Britain (Appendix to the Principles of Des- cart's Philosophy). Open Court Publishers Corp. Chicago, 1905.
Correspondence	„ <i>The Correspondence of Spinoza</i> . Edited and trans- lated by A. Wolf, George Allen and Un- win, 1928.
Emendatione	„ Spinoza's <i>Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione</i> (Tr. by R.H.M. Elwes-along with the <i>Ethica</i>)
Ethics	„ Spinoza's <i>Ethica</i> Tr. by R.H.M. Elwes. Tu- dor Publishing Co. New York. New Edition 1936.
Joachim, Study.	„ <i>A Study of the Ethics of Spinoza</i> by H. H. Jo- achim. Oxford University Press, 1901.
Joachim, Tractatus	<i>Spinoza's Tractatus De Intellectus Emenda- tione</i> : A Commentary by H.H. Joachim, Ox- ford University Press, 1940.
Martineau, Study.	<i>A Study of Spinoza</i> by J. Martineau. (First edition-London, 1882). Third edition, 1895.
Martineau, Types.	„ <i>Types of Ethical Theory</i> . 2 Vols. by J. Marti- neau. Clarendon Press Oxford. 2nd edition Revised 1886.
Muṇḍ Up.	„ <i>Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad</i> .
P. A. S.	„ Proceedings of Aristotelian Society.

- Pollock** „ *Spinoza : His Life and Philosophy*, by Sir F. Pollock (Duckworth 1880, First edition) Second edition 1912.
- ROTH** „ *Spinoza* by L. Roth. Benn, 1929.
- Short Treatise** „ *Spinoza's Short Treatise on God, Man and Human Welfare*. Tr. by L. G. Robinson. Chicago, 1909.
- Sve. Up.** „ *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*.
- Tait. Up.** „ *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*.
- Theologico** „ *Spinoza's Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. Trubner & Co. London, 1862.
- Wolfson** „ *The Philosophy of Spinoza*. 2 Vols. by H.A. Wolfson. Harvard University Press, 1934.

ERRATA

Page	Para	Line	For	Read
10	2	7	tested	tasted
11	footnote 3	1	Brahmacodana	<i>Brahmacodanā</i>
19	2	10	preson	person
21	1	2	realisied	realised
38	footnote 1			(delete inverted commas)
44	2	5	lokeṣaṇā, putreṣaṇā	<i>lokaṣaṇā</i> <i>putraṣaṇā</i>
	2	6	vitteṣaṇā	<i>vittaiṣaṇā</i>
48	1	6	Ende	Enden
50	2	22	tersenses	terseness
55	1	4	point	points
61	2	3	excep tinadvertently	except inadvertently
65	2	1	epistemologically	epistemically
74	1	1	rationaly	rationally
74	1	2	or	for
82	2	4	knowner to the	knower to be
	2	11	out : That	out that
84	2	3	helf	help
	3	2	class of souls	class souls
86	1	1	airse	arise
89	2	3	Joh	Johan
96	1	5	maniganā	<i>maṇigaṇā</i>
	footnote 3	1	Gita VII, 8.	Gītā VII, 7.
102	2	3	reason	reasons
	3	1	Brahman	Brahman ¹
		2	Self-evident Being ¹	Self-evident Being ¹
		„	Universal Being ²	Universal Being ²
		„	Pure Being ³	Pure Being ⁴
109	1	4	not to,	to, not
		4	to the subject	the subject
115	1	3	D' Vries	De Vries
124	1 (from below) ⁹		otentially	potentially
135	footnote 1	3	think think	think

Page	Para	Line	For	Read
142	footnote 2	5	24-26	124-26
151	3	5-6	personality ¹	personality ³
157	footnote	2	<i>apanudyata</i>	<i>apanudyate</i>
170	2	11	that that	that
		12	existences ⁵	existences
171	footnote 2	3	it is formed"	it" is formed
198	2 (from below)	2	upto date	uptodate
203	1	2-3	world world	world
205	footnote 1	2	dausality	causality
209	2	1	Infinite	An infinite
216	1	8	fioite	finite
218	1	12	something	same thing
223	1	6	to great	to a great
223	2	9	body"" ²	body"" ⁵
		11	dica	idea
228	2	2	it an	it as an
231	2	6	are	were
248	3	last line	life of	the life of
259	3	2,3,4	...	(insert comma after desire, spirit and hatred)
270	2 (from below)	3	ourself	self
273	1	5	exlaims	exclaims
274	1	10	requisioned	requisitioned
284	footnote 6		6	6. Correspondence XXIII p. 193
288	1 (from below)	2	discard	discord
289	2	„ „ 2	abmition	ambition
290	1	2	others is	others is,
298	2	1	would	should
302	1	11	qecomcs	becomes
309	3	4	survies	survives
310	1	1	survies	survives
		15	surving	surviving
312	2	9	to the western	to western
		10	be mere	be a mere
315	3	last line	fir	first



CHAPTER I

THE RIGHT APPROACH TO SPINOZA

A complete and correct understanding of Spinoza's system will be facilitated if the factors that contributed to the development of his thought are rightly assessed. These factors are : firstly, Spinoza's conception of philosophy, its aim and its method in distinction from that of religion ; secondly, the constitution of his own personality that is in the last resort responsible for the selection of the particular ideas which he assimilated in his system, and finally the impressions of other thinkers that he gathered in the course of his studies. The view of philosophy which Spinoza held is very different from the one that was current at that time, but its importance is such that it may be said to have given direction to his thought. Occasionally an uncompromising attitude and the mystical tinge that we find in his system, his strong rationalism and at the same time his catholicity seem to be the stamps of Spinoza's personality. Regarding his indebtedness to others, there is no gainsaying the fact that his conception of substance, of thought and extension, his analysis of emotions etc., are to be traced directly or indirectly to his predecessors. It will be our endeavour in the following few pages to deal with these factors in brief.

I

The Nature of Philosophic Consciousness

In medieval times reason was made subservient to religion, but with the rise of scientific consciousness reason became independent, and there set in the age of

free thought. Descartes no doubt initiated this tendency of independent and free thinking in philosophy. Still it cannot be said that he was completely free from the yoke of Theology. Though apparently based on independent rational principles, his philosophy is still only a systematisation of the Christian Theology. Complete freedom from the theological bias is to be found only in Spinoza. He alone of all the modern thinkers may be said to have started philosophy on right lines inasmuch as he tells us the right way in which philosophic consciousness arises and how it is distinguished from the religious consciousness. The introductory paragraphs of his unfinished work, *De Intellectus Emendatione*, are not to be taken as the gratification of the autobiographical whim, but as the analysis and description of the philosophic consciousness. Similarly, the first part of the *Theologico Political Treatise* is concerned with the problem of distinguishing philosophy and religion.¹

The question that Spinoza seems to be answering in the initial section of *De Intellectus Emendatione* is : What is it that urges us to philosophy ? This question appears to be particularly relevant when one finds that philosophy has not discovered its real problem as yet in the west and is oscillating between positivism and pragmatism on the one hand and scepticism on the other. Philosophy is generally taken to be only a way of adjusting or systematising one's ideas for the sake of satisfying the intellect. Philosophical pursuit is rarely regarded as the most vital problem of life ; it appears to

1 cf. *Theologico*, P. 270 "Thus far our aim has been to separate philosophy from theology and to proclaim the title to free thought and free discourse which these alike concede to all."

be more or less a matter of luxury.¹ Such a great thinker as Kant seems to think that philosophy is only an attempt to answer certain inveterate questions that the mind raises on account of its own nature.²

It would indeed be tragic if philosophic pursuit which has since ages occupied the best minds of the world did not spring from a more vital urge than that of a mere intellectual adjustment. Human reason does not and cannot decline to consider and answer the questions that it presents to itself, not because they are presented by mind's own nature but because they are rooted in the most vital problem of life. Kant did not try to go to the root of the urge and disposed it of by calling it the 'natural disposition' of the mind. He failed to see that even though it would be an illusion to extend the categories beyond their legitimate sphere, yet the urge which prompts us to make such a use is not illusory. That the urge takes a wrong course implies that it has a right course too, and that must be found out. There must be a way to know the *Unconditioned*.

The urge to philosophic pursuit is a kind of spiritual awakening, even as the urge to religious devotion is. What is the nature of the spiritual awakening behind the

1 cf. "In many other countries of the world, reflection on the nature of existence is a luxury of life. The serious moments are given to action, while the pursuit of philosophy comes up as a parenthesis." Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, P. 22.

2 cf. "Human reason, in one sphere of its cognition, is called upon to consider questions which it cannot decline, as they are presented by its own nature, but which it cannot answer, as they transcend every faculty of the mind." Preface to the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. (Everyman's Library Edn.).

philosophic urge ? It is the experience of utter dissatisfaction in worldly life, the experience of the misery of existence that prompts us to seek whether there is any permanent good that can be attained. The truly awakened man wants complete freedom from pain¹ and the attainment of eternal good. Worldly goods are no more able to satisfy him. It is the nature of this discontentment that Spinoza describes in *De Intellectus Emendatione* and it is worthwhile to consider it in brief.

Does the philosopher alone experience pain in this world ? It is true that each one of us suffers pain and disappointment. Still there seems to be in the subconscious of our minds a feeling of balance of pleasure over pain, and this is why we are dragging this life. Were it not so, there is no reason why any one of us should like to carry on ; as soon as pain becomes overwhelming and all hope for any improvement is lost, we feel like quitting and we do quit. The experience of pain, which the spiritually awakened man has, is of a kind and intensity different from that of the ordinary man. The experience of such a man is infinitely more intense than that of the common man ; his mind is infinitely more sensitive. A devastating earthquake, a huge flood or famine or even the conflagration of world war fails to agonise our souls to the extent of creating a revolution in our lives. But the mere sight of old age was enough to stamp the misery of the worldly existence upon a sensitive soul like Buddha's who shrieked out of sheer agony : *sarvam duḥkham*. Vyāsa the commentator

1 cf. *Duḥkhatrayābhihātājijñāsā tadapaghātaka hetau. Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, I.

of the *Yoga Sūtras*, compares¹ the sensitiveness of the man of discrimination with that of the eye-ball to which even a small speck of wool, which is not felt on any other part of the body, becomes most painful.

It is not one thing or another of life that is painful, but life as such appears to be full of misery to the spiritual man. He need not and does not experiment with every thing ; it is as if he gets hold of a standpoint from which worldly life reveals its hollowness at one glance ; it is as if by good luck he happens to go behind the screen of the drama, and see things in their nakedness, nay, it is as if, the screen is suddenly lifted up and worldly life stands out as it really is, stunned and unable to hide itself any more. Indeed, it is like waking from a dream.

It is not only pain but also the so-called 'pleasure' of worldly life that the philosopher unlike the ordinary man shuns. The ordinary man is afraid of pain only, but the philosopher feels that his real enemy is 'pleasure' which decoys him and entangles him in worldly life. Pain comes only in the wake of pleasure. Spinoza gives² a marvellous analysis of the way in which the so-called objects of worldly enjoyment, namely, riches, fame and pleasure, become really the sources of pain. To a thinking man there are various reasons why he must not seek them. These objects are only temporary and not permanent. By their very nature they cannot be had to an infinite extent. Moreover, one feels piqued to discover that the very objects that one seeks for pleasure

1 *Yoga Sūtra* II, 15. *Duḥkḥmeva sarvaṃ vivekinaḥ* cf. the commentary. *Yathorṇātantur-akṣipātre nyastaḥ sparśena duḥkha-yati na cānyeṣu gātrāvayaveṣu.*

2 *Emendations*—Introduction.

become the sources of great pain and misery.¹ One also finds that the enjoyment of those things increases the desire rather than lessens it.² Further there is a conflict among the desires themselves and all cannot be simultaneously fulfilled. Finally, one feels that the pleasure that the objects yield is only relative and not absolute. In the absence of any desire for enjoyment they become insipid. Thus there is a kind of *final* and complete disillusionment about the very nature of worldly life.³ The disillusionment is so complete that the awakened man would never *return* to worldly life whether some other good is attained or not.

The experience of the philosopher is different from that of the ordinary man yet in another way. The experience of pain does not goad the ordinary man to go in search of a higher life, but it does so in the case of the philosopher who starts his lonely journey on an unknown path in search of the supreme good. He becomes contemplative regarding his ultimate destiny. Is the whole show going to end with the end of this body? One hears in the quiet recesses of one's heart a deep echo, a voice which cannot be put by. Are

1 cf. Spinoza *Emendatione*, P. 3. "All the objects pursued by the multitude, not only bring no remedy that tends to preserve our being but even act as hindrances, causing the death not seldom of those who possess them and always of those who are possessed by them."

2 cf. Na jātu kāmāḥ kāmānām upabhogena śāmyati.

3 When western thinkers regard this attitude towards worldly life as pessimism, and what is worse, when they associate it with social and physical conditions, they exhibit only their usual lack of spiritual insight. cf. W. S. Urquhart *Pantheism and the Value of Life*, Pp. 104, 160-161.

we not chasing shadows ? What is the real ? And if death is the inevitable end of life, why not see the end as soon as possible and get rid of the tension ? If only one could be somehow convinced that there is no future after death, the wisest course would be to hasten to commit suicide and get rid of this empty existence ? But how to be convinced—that is the problem. There is something which makes us feel afraid of the unknown, the future.¹ The agony is like that of Hamlet who cries “To be or not to be ?” Hamlet decides to commit suicide, but he sees the apparition of his father and trembles to think that the end of life may not be the end of his misery as it is in the case of his father. The hesitation that one feels in deciding to end life is to be traced not only to our fear of the future ; it has a deeper root and that is, the desire to enjoy unmixed pleasure. Suicide will at best end the tension, but it will also rule out all chances of discovering a life of joy without pain. An infinite eternal happiness is the secret craving of every heart. To be free from pain one need not necessarily commit suicide because that is possible even by renouncing the desire for pleasures. The problem is ; how to get infinite joy or happiness ?

The natural tendency of the mind is to seek pleasures and to discover the means of getting them. Hence it is only by the grace of God that one comes to see the vanity of them. And even when one has seen it, it is with great difficulty that one is able to renounce the desire for pleasures completely. One likes to have

1 In India, both in Hinduism and Buddhism this fear of the future takes the form of the fear of cycle of birth and death, a fear which is more dreadful than that of hell-fire or even death or extinction.

both God and the world at the same time. But as it is, we cannot have.¹ There can be no compromise between the spiritual good and the worldly good. One cannot serve God and mammon both at the same time. The one is neither continuous nor co-ordinate with the other. In fact they are not two. The one is only a negation of the other, and hence both cannot be had simultaneously. Spinoza himself "debated whether it would not be possible to arrive at the new principle or at any rate a certainty concerning its existence, without changing the conduct and usual plan of my life....."² But all in vain; he discovered that "all these ordinary objects of desire would be obstacles in the way of a search for something different and new."³ Nay, he found that by abandoning these objects he was not renouncing anything valuable but only something that was uncertain by reason of its own nature "leaving certain evils for a certain good."⁴ Let it be noted that the giving up of the worldly pursuits is not sacrifice but renunciation. Sacrifice implies a consciousness of the value of what is sacrificed. The worldly pursuits are renounced because they are found to be not only worthless but even harmful to a higher life. Having renounced the wordly pleasures man becomes mad for the unknown good. "I thus perceived that I was in a state of great peril, and I compelled myself to seek with all my strength for a

1 cf. *The Herond of Heaven* 'For, though I knew His love who followed,

Yet was I sore adread.

Lest, having Him, I must have naught besides.'

2 *Emendationes* P. 1.

3 *Ibid.*, P. 2.

4 *Ibid.*, Pp. 2-3.

remedy however uncertain it might be ; as a sick man struggling with a deadly disease, when he sees that death will surely be upon him unless a remedy be found, is compelled to seek such a remedy with all his strength inasmuch as his whole hope lies therein.”¹

Further Spinoza found that our happiness or unhappiness depends wholly on the quality of the object which we love. All troubles arise “from the love of what is perishable.” “But love toward a thing eternal and infinite feeds the mind wholly with joy, and is itself unmingled with any sadness, wherefore it is greatly to be desired and sought for with all our strength.”² That eternal and infinite object of love must be discovered. And it is the idea of that object alone that should be the master idea of one’s whole thought. It is from that idea alone that all other truths have to be derived.³ It is because people have forgotten to regard the idea of the eternal as the controlling idea or the pivot of whole philosophy that all sorts of troubles have arisen. “The nature of God which should be reflected on first, inasmuch as it is prior both in the order of knowledge and the order of nature, they have taken to be last in the order of knowledge, and have put into the first place what they call the objects of sensation.....”⁴

God is the central truth, and it is in the light of that truth that everything else has to be viewed. All other doctrines are only of pragmatic value, for they are desirable to the extent they help us to realise God. It is the

1 *Emendatione*, P. 13.

2 *Ibid.*, P. 3.

3 *Ibid.*, P. 13.

4 *Ethics* II, Scholium to Prop., 10.

conception of God that has to determine all other conceptions rather than vice versa. If a change is necessary, it should be made in our conception of other things rather than in that of God. And since the realisation of God is the most vital problem of life, Spinoza was of the opinion that the whole life and all the sciences must be directed to that end. "Thus it is apparent to every one that I wish to direct all sciences to one end and aim, so that we may attain to the supreme human perfection... and, therefore, what in the sciences does not serve to promote our object will have to be rejected as useless."¹ This is the scale of values of a really spiritual man for whom there is only one end. Spinozism cannot be understood without understanding this orientation and order of emphasis.

Next to this is Spinoza's view that spiritual life is an end in itself ; it is not for some other reward or value. That is exactly the real meaning of supreme or absolute good ; it is an end and never a means to any thing. Hence no one need come to it with hopes ; only he is fit for spiritual life who has freed himself of all desires and has tested the bliss of desirelessness ; "Virtue is to be desired for its own sake and that there is nothing more excellent or more useful to us, for the sake of which we should desire it."² Spinoza goes to the extent of saying that the man who loves God truly will not desire that God should love him in return.

From all this it is evident that Philosophy is not meant for all. It is meant only for those few who have the

¹ *Emendationes* P. 5.

² *Ethics*. IV. Scholium to Prop. 18 Also cf. *Gītā*. Yam labdhvā cāparam lābham manyate nādhikam tataḥ VI, 22.

spiritual awakening which must precede it. One whose vision is clouded with desires, one who does not have the faith that the supreme good can be discovered and realised need not and must not touch philosophy. Spinoza here seems to be walking in the foot-steps of Indian sages who believed in what is called *adbikāri-vāda*. Nothing was transmitted to one who did not fully deserve it. The stories of Naciketā and Maitreyī tell us how hard were the tests to which students of *Adbyātma-vidyā* were put. Yama tells¹ Naciketā to ask for any thing which he considers to be as valuable as the knowledge of the secret of the self, and is delighted to find that the disciple does not consider any thing to be more valuable, and then initiates him into the knowledge of the self. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* tells us at the very outset the qualities or virtues that must be found in one who wants to know Brahman. The man must have *nityānitya vastu-viveka* or the discrimination between the permanent and the impermanent ; this produces in us real *vairāgya*. In addition to this the aspirant must also have *śamadamādi sampat* and *mumukṣutva* or the desire for freedom. It is evident that these are not mere moral virtues but what Plotinus called 'cathartic' or purifying virtues. If philosophy is taught to one who does not have these, it fails to bear fruit and the result is that the man becomes a sceptic.² The point is that *philosophy does not produce but presupposes the spiritual inkling*³; it only gives clarity to it and deepens it.

1 *Kaṭhapaniṣad*. I (i) 24. Etattulyam yadi manyase varam vṛṇiṣva.

2 cf. *Brahmajijñāsāyā anadhikāryatvāt*. Śaṅkara B. S. B. I (i), i.

3 cf. *Brahmacodana tu puruṣam avabodhayatyeva kevalam*. Śaṅkara on B. S. B. I (i) i.

The modern world seems to have lost its faith in the power of spiritual methods to allay its fears and fulfil its hopes. It is not believed that any extra empirical knowledge is possible or useful for the happiness of man; hence the mad race for power and possession today. Only he who has faith in the power of knowledge can take to philosophy. Vācaspati Miśra in his commentary on the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*¹ suggests at the outset five alternative conditions which may make the pursuit of philosophy useless. It would be useless if (i) there were no experience of pain, (ii) even if it were, its removal were not desired, (iii) even if desired, its removal were not possible for some reason or other, (iv) even when the removal were possible philosophy were not the adequate means to remove it, (v) and even if adequate, it were not the easiest means. The first two alternatives are inconceivable. The third and fourth alternatives can be said to be true only after a trial has been made of philosophy. And if one thinks that there can be a method of freeing us from pain easier than the spiritual, one does not realise the gravity of the situation. It indicates a failure to make a correct diagnosis of the causes of pain. The desire for enjoyment alone is the cause of pain. Pain is in the very constitution of worldly life. It should therefore be either real i.e., irremovable or unreal. If one considers it to be removable, one has also to admit that it is unreal and if that is so, the knowledge that reveals its unreality must be attained. Thus a complete and final freedom from pain is possible only through knowledge i.e., by means of the spiritual method.

1 Kārikā I.

II

Philosophy and Religion

Besides philosophy i.e., the method of knowledge, there is another spiritual discipline also, namely, religion or the method of devotion. Religion and philosophy are the two known spiritual disciplines that promise to us complete freedom from pain and the enjoyment of infinite happiness. Their mutual relation has been differently conceived by different thinkers but both are recognised to be spiritual disciplines leading us directly or indirectly to the same goal. The essence of spiritual life is freedom from egoity leading to freedom from pain ; both knowledge and devotion are intended to give us this freedom.

Although both Religion and Philosophy are spiritual, yet according to Spinoza their standpoints are fundamentally different. It is worth while to make the distinction clear as he was very particular about the distinction of religion and philosophy and was aware¹ that much of the confusion in philosophy was traceable to a failure to distinguish the two. "I should like to remark here that while we are speaking philosophically we must not use the modes of expression of Theology."² His contention is that though philosophy and religion are both spiritual disciplines yet their modes of expression and methods are different. As already pointed out he devotes³ the first part of the *Theologico Political Treatise* to the question of the relation of philosophy and religion and

1 *Correspondence* XXX, P. 206.

2 *Correspondence* XXII, P. 190.

3 *Theologico* P. 250 "to distinguish between faith and philosophy which indeed is the main purpose of my whole work."

their distinction. This question is itself philosophical and hence Spinoza addresses his book to philosophical readers only.¹

Spinoza believed that religion is a spiritual discipline and not merely a make-belief. When his landlady asked him whether "he believed she could be saved in the Religion she professed," Spinoza answered, "Your, religion is a good one ; you need not look for another nor doubt that you may be saved in it, provided whilst you live at the same time a peaceable and quiet life."² This answer reveals to us Spinoza's admirable catholicity³ of mind, which is found only in a true philosopher, the priest of all religions and not in dogmatists. It is also evident from this that Spinoza believed religion to be a way of salvation. But at the same time he emphasised that it is not the outer garb⁴ of religion that matters ; the inner life of the individual should be "peaceable and quiet." Religion teaches humility and not hostility. While Spinoza would accept a variety of alternative religions he was against accepting indiscriminately anything that is passed on as revealed; he asks us to exercise our judgment "in order that what is revealed may be embraced with moral certainty at least."⁵ He tells us that the essential teaching of religion is piety based on our obedience to God. That mental peace and tranquillity,

1 *Theologico*, P. 29.

2 Quoted in Roth, P. 13.

3 cf. *Gītā* III, 26 Na buddhibhedham janayet ajñānām karma sanginām.

4 cf. *Theologico*, P. 23. "If faith were to be inferred from action rather than profession it would indeed be impossible to say to which sect or creed the majority of mankind belong." Also P. 257.

5 *Ibid.*, P. 266.

that mastery over passions, in a word, that freedom from the lower self, which is the aim of every spiritual discipline, is assured to the religious man through his love of and obedience to God. The love of the Lord melts our heart and purifies it. Obedience to God is possible only if there is self-surrender or love.

Spinoza is also aware that the multitude depend for their light on revelation rather than on reason, and fights against regarding reason alone as the source of spirituality; "There is no assignable reason wherefore God should not also in other ways impart to man those things of which he is cognizant by the light of nature."¹ The importance that he attached to revelation is evident from the following too. "These I estimate very highly; for as *we do not perceive by the light we bring with us in the world that simple obedience is the way of life, whilst revelation alone by the singular grace of God teaches this, which we could not learn by reason*, it follows that the scriptures have been a great source of comfort to mankind; all without exception may obey, but *there are very few indeed who, under the guidance of reason, could attain to habits of virtue* so that without scripture we might despair of the well-doing of almost all mankind."² Spinoza was not a deist. True, he did not believe in miracles or some other dogmas of religion, but that was not because he rejected them as worthless, but because he wanted to remove them from philosophy. The essence of religion does not lie in its dogmas but in the life of virtue to which they lead.

While Spinoza regarded both philosophy and religion as spiritual disciplines, he was careful enough to note their

¹ *Theologico*, P. 33.

² *Ibid.*, P. 269.

differences also. The two are fundamentally different regarding their methods¹ and hence they appeal to two different kinds of people. While philosophy is based on reason, religion depends on revelation ; the one demands clear perception, the other demands unconditional surrender and obedience. Religion teaches that salvation can be had through obedience to God. This is the most fundamental dogma of religion. But this itself cannot be found out by reason ; for this dogma we have to depend on revelation. "No one knows by nature that he owes any obedience to God ; this knowledge follows from no reason, but can only be enforced upon every one by revelation confirmed by signs."² Thus the doctrine of obedience as well as the commands for obedience are both revealed. And if religion does not depend on reason, philosophy too does not depend on revelation ; revelation teaches us only obedience.³ The philosopher "has no other touchstone for truth than the natural understanding, and not theology."⁴ Thus Spinoza does not recognise merely the difference of religion and philosophy but also their autonomy and fights against the subordination of one to the other. "I fully persuaded myself that scripture left reason absolutely free, and had nothing in common with, no dependence on, philosophy but that this as well as that must support itself on its own footing."⁵ We should depend on scripture

1 *Theologico*, P. 27. "The end and object of revealed knowledge is nothing but obedience, and is so distinct from natural knowledge as well in its objects as in its grounds and means as to have nothing in common with it."

2 *Ibid.*, P. 283.

3 *Ibid.*, P. 250.

4 *Correspondence* XXIII, P. 189.

5 *Theologico*, P. 27.

alone for its meaning and interpretation and not on reason ; so also philosophy must depend on reason alone and not on scripture ; "each may possess its own province without clashing, and neither need be subordinate to the other."¹ Persons who make revelation aidant to reason are sceptics because they deny the certainty of reason, while those who do the reverse are dogmatists because they deny the autonomy of revelation ; if men think that "faith and religion are not to be vindicated unless men agree to ignore all experience and bid adieu to reason," they "rather fear than trust the scriptures."²

The two tendencies, namely, to reason and to obey, are inherent in us and are independent of each other. The question as to why we believe in revelation is as absurd as to ask why we believe in reason. Sometimes we are faced with a dilemma "if we embrace it (revelation) without reason, like blind men we therein act foolishly, and without discretion. If on the contrary we seek to determine this foundation by reason theology thereby becomes a part of philosophy, and not to be severed from it."³ Here it is forgotten that it is the very nature of faith to be blind ; faith is belief in the unknown and hence to accept revelation blindly is not anything repugnant in religion but only in philosophy. Reason alone is critical and not faith. Faith implies surrender. *Reason can have peace not by harmonising itself but only by distinguishing itself from that.* It may appear that Spinoza agrees with the Hindu view in holding that scripture is independent, but differs from it inasmuch as he holds that

1 *Theologico*, P. 28.

2 *Ibid.*, P. 262.

3 *Ibid.*, Pp. 265-266.

philosophy also is independent of revelation. This anxiety for the freedom of reason is excusable as a characteristic of the age in which Spinoza was born.

The authority of revelation is based on the authority of the prophet and his experience, and not on reason. Therefore they "err egregiously who seek to prove the authority of scripture by means of mathematical formulas or demonstrations."¹ Spinoza points out that even though the investigation of reason be spiritual knowledge yet its teachers cannot be called prophets ; "for the things taught (by reason) may be perceived and understood by mankind at large with the same certainty as by those who teach, in virtue of common powers, and without the aid of faith."² Thus the appeal of the teachings of reason is irrespective of any country or clan or period of time. This is not so in the case of revealed religions. Also, the certainty of the teachings of reason is different from that of revelation ; the former does not require faith which the latter persupposes. Were it not so, every one who heard the prophet would become a prophet. Revealed religions cannot be universal by their very nature, and so Spinoza is generous enough to appreciate the value of other religions different from his own. He says, "As in the nature of things, then, that dogma which to one is pious and profitable is to another impious and profitless, therefore are all dogmas to be judged by their effects, by the works they produce, by the lives and conversation to which they lead."³ Prophets are not particular about consistency ; they adjust their

¹ *Theologico*, P. 266.

² *Ibid.*, P. 32.

³ *Ibid.*, P. 254.

teachings to the people they address.¹ The test of religion is efficacy, not consistency. "It is not the man therefore who shows the best reasons for his faith who necessarily has the best faith but he who shows the noblest works of justice and charity."²

If the nature of love on which religious faith is based is understood, all the above characteristics of religion such as irrationality, popularity, relativity, anthropomorphism etc., will become obvious. Love is blind and sentimental ; it tries to see things in its own way, and hence formulates dogmas for its support and satisfaction. Love is pragmatic.³ Philosophy is rational in its doctrines ; dogmas must not be looked upon as doctrines. There is no harm if religion believes in God as a person, in His incarnation, or in creation out of His fiat or will.⁴ But this is not admissible in philosophy which is critical and rational.

Spinoza in his view of the nature of philosophy and religion and their difference is essentially right, and it would be easy to justify him. Philosophy and religion are really meant for two types of men. Psychologically there are two fundamental types and their characteristics are widely different, if not opposed also. There is one type of men who are credulous and obedient, meek and submissive, doting and devoted, docile and dependent.

1 *Theologico*, P. 247. "All this is mere condescension to the capacity of the vulgar."

2 *Ibid.*, P. 257.

3 *Ibid.*, P. 252 "Faith is to entertain such thoughts of God as if wanting obedience to him is withheld and obedience given adequate thoughts of God are implied."

4 *Correspondence* XXIII, P. 190.

In such people there seems to be no will or self-assertiveness. There is another type of men who are slow to obey, hard to be convinced, independent and self-respecting, courageous and confident. In such people we find a strong will and assertiveness. One can easily see that the characteristics of the former type are those of religious men while the characteristics of the latter type are those of philosophers. It is true that in actual life we do not come across such clear-cut types, still if we bear their characteristics in mind, we may understand their views more easily.

The difference between religious and philosophic natures can be understood in another way also. We have already suggested that spirituality is more or less a break from natural life. There are two pillars on which the whole structure of natural life stands ; they are the will to assert oneself, and the desire to enjoy. It can be easily seen that natural life will be impossible in the absence of these two ; and since spirituality finds its way into our life only by superseding our natural values, it is obvious that *spiritual life will mean the breaking down of one or both of the pillars of natural life*. Spirit breaks forth into our life only by breaking or nullifying either *kartṛtva* (the will to do) or *bhokṛtva* (the will to enjoy) or even both. With the rise of spiritual consciousness one will either come to realise that one is impotent i.e., one's will is nothing, whereas God's will is every thing, or one will feel that the world can no more give any pleasure i.e., one will cease to have any desire for enjoyment. In the former case *kartṛtva* is pulled down, in the latter *bhokṛtva* disappears ; but nevertheless there remains some *bhokṛtva* in the former and some *kartṛtva* in the latter. This is because the two cannot be separated,

both being rooted in egoity. In actual life we find that while a man has realised his helplessness, he has not given up his desire for enjoyment, and while another has ceased to take pleasure in anything worldly, he has not ceased to assert himself or to exercise his will. We do not, however, mean that in one case *kartṛtva* and in the other *bhokṛtva* is totally absent; all that is meant is that the one predominates over the other. The religious man feels some kind of helplessness and dependence though he is not free from desires, while the philosopher though more or less free from desires, has still the will to make efforts. There is self-surrender in the one and self-determination in the other.

The very initiation of the religious man into the realm of the spirit is different from that of the philosopher. It is almost universally admitted that religion begins with the consciousness of some mysterious power or '*Mysterium Tremendum*' as Otto happily calls it.¹ Unless there is a concrete experience of such power, religion is mere ritual and routine. It is also believed that we cannot trace the manifestation of such power to any tangible cause; hence this manifestation is felt to be more or less sudden, and it finds the individual almost unprepared. Thus it appears as if spirit thrusts itself upon any one whom it chooses without seeking his consent or demanding any preparation from him. We may cite many cases in which the whole life of the individual has been suddenly transformed and reorientated by the experience of the *Mysterium Tremendum* or the *Nonmenon*. Such a revelation is a direct call from God. This is why the religious man is dogmatic and uninquisitive; he will

1 cf. *Idea of the Holy*, R. Otto.

never care to prove¹ the existence of God or soul, and will rather smile at all such attempts. The religious man confronts reality face to face as it were, and this experience is so telling and efficacious that his whole life and attitude are changed, and then follows the kind of life that we see in religious devotees everywhere. The consciousness of a mighty power is so over-powering that one immediately begins to feel one's littleness, one's impotence, one's nothingness. This experience does not make one feel any humiliation, rather one is led to prayer and worship ; it is almost a joy to be aware of one's nothingness. In a very non-natural manner the individual feels drawn towards the very object that over-powers him which is awful and mysterious.

Thus while the spur to religious discipline is more or less direct contact with the '*Mysterium Tremendum*,' the spur to philosophic or reflective consciousness is a serious doubt regarding the worth of worldly life. Reflection means turning back ; and when does a man look back or turn back ? It is only when he stumbles or suspects that he is going the wrong way that he pauses and reflects. So long as the journey is smooth, one goes on heedlessly, but when there is some difficulty one has to stop. So long as natural life is happy and engaging, smooth and easy, there will be no chance of our opening the eyes. It is only when spirit so moves from within that natural life seems to be empty and aimless that man

1 cf. "In ages of religious activity and creativity proofs play no part ; they come after ; and when they appear it is forgotten that religion existed as a vital thing long before proofs, and thus must possess origins of its own quite different, and that only in these latter can the ultimate reasons for its validity be situated." R. Otto, *The Philosophy of Religion*, P. 94.

begins to be reflective. Then alone we strain ourselves to find out the inner core of things. This is why we say that unless *bhokṛtva* or the desire to enjoy worldly values decreases there can be no real philosophy or reflection. Philosophy begins with disillusionment about the life of the self and is therefore necessarily self-conscious, critical and reflective. But even though the desire for enjoyment is not there, the will to make efforts is present, because the highest goal is not yet achieved.

We may now contrast the religious attitude with the philosophic. The religious man, since he has had a glimpse into the 'Mysterious' and has become aware of a different level of causation, will be more ready to believe whatever is baffling and mysterious, will be credulous and even superstitious. This is why mythologies appear to be absurd and miracles surprising to a natural man but they are not so to the religious nature. He will not shun worldly pleasures because spirit has manifested itself to him without demanding any withdrawal from them ; he will rather regard the Mysterious Power as a person to whom he can lay bare his soul, to whom he can pray for help and for the fulfilment of his desires,¹ from whom he can expect response. An almost personal intimacy comes to be established even in the first meeting. He will believe in incarnation and revelation, and will be confident that the Power will not fail him in times of need. He will like to do only that which pleases Him ; even morality, he accepts not because it is good in itself but because it pleases Him. He will

1 The *Gītā* speaks of an arthārthī bhakta cf. also ye yathā mām prapadyante tāñstathaiva bhajāmyaham.

like to have personal fellowship with him, and will even wish that his whole world were with him in His fellowship. Thus his attitude towards the world is not of rejection but of acceptance. The religious man does not feel thwarted in his natural life. As a matter of fact, religion is as much a forward movement of life as natural life itself ; and the former goes along with the latter to a great extent, and that for the simple reason that the natural desires are still in the mind of the religious man. The religious man thus follows the line of least resistance and goes along with the current of natural life though with changed attitude. Gradually the love for the Noumenal produces in man desirelessness and renunciation also.

The philosophic attitude is not only different from the natural outlook but is even opposed to it. Since philosophy begins with the consciousness of the emptiness of worldly life, its attitude towards the world will not be that of acceptance but that of rejection. And since the philosopher is free from worldly desires, his conception of the highest ideal will not include in it the fulfilment of natural desires.¹ Nor will he be prone to look upon Reality as a person to whom he may pray or from whom he may expect anything. His attitude is that of searching the truth in an impersonal manner ; and since he has been aware of the decoying and deceiving nature of empirical knowledge, he is alert and cautious in his search ; slow to accept any authority, he scrutinises everything and likes to have evidence for everything that he accepts. Philosophy is a deliberate and open-eyed search for reality and not a sudden revela-

¹ Heaven is the religious ideal and not the philosophic.

tion of it as it is in religion ; it is a cessation of life along the natural current ; it is even a withdrawal from it and is a backward movement of life rather than a forward one. Natural life is thwarted with the rise of philosophic consciousness ; the individual starts his strenuous journey against the current, something which requires great strength of will ; and we know that the philosopher has to be a man of strong will but not the religious man. This is why while religion is comparatively more popular, philosophy is not. Every one cannot fulfil the conditions which philosophy demands ; only very few can ; the path of philosophy is as strenuous as tight-rope-walking.¹ Philosophy cannot begin except with a rejection or at least a suspicion of empirical knowledge, a thing which is rare and even unthinkable ordinarily. Even those crude and common sense philosophies whose ideal is to justify and defend the empirical attitude, have to reject something as false ; when they profess that they do not propose to cancel any part of natural belief, they forget that they cancel at least the incipient suggestion or suspicion that natural knowledge may be false.² Thus we find that while philosophy is impossible without rejection or the consciousness of the false, religion is impossible without affirmation i.e., the consciousness of the real.

When the distinction between philosophy and religion is not kept in mind, anthropomorphism, teleology, faith in miracles etc., are introduced in philosophy where they

1 *Gītā* XII 5 *Kleśāḥ dhikatarāḥ teṣāṃ avyaktāsaktacetasām.*

2 The world-affirmation of commonsense philosophies is not mere affirmation because that is the attitude of mind before the rise of philosophic attitude or self-consciousness ; it is rather a reaffirmation, i.e., affirmation after rejection.

have no place. This is why Spinoza criticises these notions. He does not criticise these notions as such but only their confusion with philosophy ; for he says that "it is quite appropriate in theology that it should be said that God desires something, that God is affected with weariness at the deeds of the ungodly and with pleasure at those of the pious."¹

III

Philosophy and its Method

Since philosophy became independent of revelation, the one great anxiety of the philosophers in the beginning of the modern era came to be as to how to present philosophy in such a manner that there could be no room for doubt or difficulty or personal bias. Mathematics appeared to be a science that was so perfect that nobody could doubt its rationality and consistency. Hence it was felt that if philosophy also could be presented on mathematical lines it would be accepted as universally and easily as mathematics. Descartes himself made some attempts in this direction, but it was Spinoza who carried the idea through and presented his whole philosophy in the geometrical manner.

The method of philosophy should mean the way of arriving at one's philosophy ; but in the case of Spinoza the question regarding the method means the relation of the geometrical method to his philosophy. As regards the way of reaching his conclusions he tells us in his *De Intellectus Emendatione* that "the intellect by its native strength makes for itself intellectual instruments where-

¹ *Correspondence* XXIII, P. 190.

by it acquires strength for performing other intellectual operations and from these operations gets again fresh instruments, or power of pushing its investigations further, and thus gradually proceeds till it reaches the summit of wisdom."¹ At another place² he says that since truth needs no sign, it follows that "the true method does not consist in seeking for the signs of truth after the acquisition of the idea, but the true method teaches us the order in which we should seek for truth itself, or the subjective essences of things or ideas, for all these expressions are synonymous." Further, it is said that "that method will be most perfect which affords the standard of the given idea of the most perfect being whereby we may direct our mind."³ Spinoza has said all this in a general way, but since *De Intellectus Emendatione* was left incomplete we are not quite able to know the way in which he himself found out his first principles. It is, however, possible to imagine that since according to him intuition is the best mode of perception, the true method consists in deriving all other ideas from the one which is intuitively perceived, namely, the idea of God. Spinoza was essentially an intuitionist, as everyone is in the last resort, and not a dogmatist. He holds that truth is self-conceived, but emphasises the order in which it should be seen. The mind "must deduce" he says,⁴ "all its ideas from the idea which represents the origin and source of the whole of nature." This is why Spinoza begins his

1 *Emendatione*, P. 10.

2 *Ibid.*, P. 11.

3 *Ibid.*, P. 12.

4 *Ibid.*, P. 13.

treatise with the idea of God and tries to relate all other ideas to this central one.

Our main problem is the geometrical method which Spinoza has adopted; for there is as much controversy regarding this as there is regarding any of his doctrines. It becomes particularly necessary to discuss the question, for it is often held that the geometrical method is also responsible for some of the philosophical views of Spinoza.

There are two things concerning the geometrical method about which there can be no doubt or dispute. Firstly, since ancient times philosophy has been written in ever so many forms namely, verse, dialogue, letters, autobiography etc., and so Spinoza has not transgressed any rule or tradition in following the geometrical method. Secondly, even the particular form employed by Spinoza is not quite an innovation; it is found to have been used by many of his predecessors¹; because the geometrical method in its essence does not mean anything more than a systematic presentation of propositions.

It is on some other grounds that objection to the employment of the geometrical method is taken. Very often it is pointed out that this method as such is unfit for philosophy. The implicit assumption of all such criticism is that there is a universally accepted notion of philosophy and its method. The assumption is quite contrary to facts. There have been ever so many kinds of philosophy and as many methods. It is impossible to declare off-hand and *a priori* that a particular form is unfit for philosophy unless a particular philosophy is

¹ cf. Wolfson, Vol. I, Pp. 40-44.

implicity kept in view. Spinoza was under no obligation to accept or anticipate such views. The only just course open for the critics is to try to understand Spinoza sympathetically and see whether for his view his method was fit or not.

One reason why the geometrical method is said to be unfit for philosophy is that while geometry takes much for granted,¹ philosophy does not, and so its method must be different. There is no doubt that philosophy is more critical and self-conscious than any of the sciences. Still the statement of propositions and their analysis is similar in both and it is immaterial whether they are put in the geometrical form or in some different form. Also, it is not quite correct to say that philosophy takes nothing for granted, because then it cannot even start. The first principles of every philosophy cannot be derived in spite of apparent attempts to do so; in the last resort they have to be taken for granted; they depend upon the insight and the critical faculty of the philosopher. In this sense philosophy is not as universal as science is. Spinoza is not unaware of his presuppositions; he makes them clear in his axioms and definitions. The implication is that our differences are ultimate and should be made clear at the outset. One need not hope by one's philosophy to convert others who have different stand-points, because it is not an instrument of conviction. Discussions only disengage our differences.

Another objection is that the geometrical method "does not furnish to philosophy the paradigm of a science in which every thing follows by strict necessity from its fundamental principle..... For the idea of

1 cf. Caird, Pp. 114-115. Also Joachim, *Study*, P. 11.

space does not evolve from itself a system of geometrical truth."¹ It is also pointed out that Substance and Space differ in many respects and so it is not proper to apply to one a method which suits only the other. The point that this criticism misses is that the geometrical method does not have anything to do with things, Substance or Space, but only with the propositions about them. Substance and Space may be utterly different and in fact they are, but this does not mean that the rules of syllogism are also different in their respective cases. If this objection were valid, how could Spinoza ever hope to write the Hebrew grammar in the geometrical form?

The most serious criticism² of the geometrical method is said to be that while geometry deals with something objective, philosophy deals with what is non-objective or spiritual, and hence the method of the one must not be applied to the other. It is no doubt true that the relations of spatial modes are only mechanical and quantitative while spiritual relations are fundamentally different. But the point at issue here is whether the form of presentation must of necessity affect the thing presented. Any theoretical argument can be expressed in the geometrical form. The geometrical method does not imply, as Hegel said,³ that one is either a Spinozist or not a philosopher at all. With different first principles one can have different systems.

1 cf. Caird, P. 115. Also cf. Latta, *Mind*, N. S. VIII, Pp. 335-336.

2 Caird, P. 117.

3 *History of Philosophy* by Hegel Tr. by E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson (1895) Vol. III, P. 283.

Caird points out¹ different kinds of changes such as chemical, organic and spiritual which cannot all be comprehended under spatial determinations. He seems to forget that in philosophy it is not the variety of changes that is considered but the fact of change as such is considered in a certain manner. Philosophy does not consider change piece-meal ; it is a way of looking at the *whole* universe, a way to which all otherways are reduced ; it is a kind of pulverisation of empirical mental rigidities or habits of thought to one pattern of thinking. No philosophy can accommodate all aspects of common experience as they are ; they are so antithetical. For philosophy all change is one whether it be organic or chemical.

It is very often felt that ethics which deals with the problem of 'ought' cannot be treated in the manner of geometry.² But this is a misunderstanding. Firstly, in his *Ethics* Spinoza is not discussing the ordinary moral problem or the 'ought' but the spiritual and metaphysical issues. Secondly, the problem of 'ought' itself may be conceived differently and none can put an *a priori* ban on treating it in a mathematical way. Those who uncritically assume the truth of the freedom of will may find it difficult to accommodate themselves to Spinoza's way of thinking, but that does not imply any fault of Spinoza.

There is a view that the geometrical method, though it may be unfit for any other philosophy, is not only fit but even necessary or almost organic to the philosophy of Spinoza. It is as if Spinoza could not but write in the geometrical manner. It is pointed out that "the form of

1 Caird, Pp. 118-119.

2 Martineau. *Types* Vol. I, P. 280.

Spinoza's treatment is essential to its matter.....the subject-matter demands such treatment."¹ The geometrical method is said to be a consequence of the mathematical way of looking at things.² This appears to us to be a false notion. The mathematical way of looking at things means, if anything, only a denial of will either in man or in God ;³ because 'will' as ordinarily conceived, is so indeterminate that it is not amenable to mathematical treatment. This denial is possible without the geometrical method ; many other thinkers have done it. Moreover, if there were a logical connection between the form and substance, Spinoza could not have contemplated the idea of writing the Hebrew grammar⁴ in the geometrical form. In his *Short Treatise* there is the mathematical way of viewing the universe but not the geometrical method, while in the *Principles of the Philosophy of Descartes* there is the geometrical form but not the mathematical attitude. Hence it must be asserted that Spinoza adopted the geometrical method not because his philosophy demanded it but because of other reasons.

The most extreme view of the geometrical method is not that it has a necessary connection with Spinoza's philosophy but that it actually influenced his views. It amounts to saying not that his philosophy required this particular method but that the geometrical method required the particular views he held. It is said that Spinoza's identification of the Infinite with the purely positive, and of the finite with the negative betrays "the

1 Joachim, *Study*, P. 13.

2 Erdmann, *History of Philosophy*, Vol. II, P. 58.

3 cf. Wolfson, Vol P. 53.

4 cf. Ibid., I, P. 44.

narrowing influence of Spinoza's method."¹ The geometrical method excludes any conception of the finite and infinite except as determinate and indeterminate ; a figure has no individuality except in the way it is determined, and every positive element in it belongs only to the Infinite. This is what Caird laments, but it shows how difficult it is for him to extricate himself from the Hegelian view. According to him perhaps a philosophy is doomed if it does not admit self-determination. But what is worse is his suspicion that Spinoza was perhaps unconsciously led into this position on account of the method. This is nothing short of slighting the intelligence of Spinoza ; because it implies that Spinoza did not know what he was saying. Caird traces Spinoza's denial of human freedom² and teleology³ to the influence of the geometrical method. It is really surprising how he forgets that the freedom of will and teleology have been denied by others who did not adopt the geometrical method, and so the geometrical method and the denial need not necessarily be connected. It is one thing to say that the geometrical method fits in with the denial of the freedom of will and teleology, but it is quite different to suggest that the method itself necessitated or determined the denial.

It is only an unnecessary fuss that the critics seem to have made about the geometrical method. A close examination will reveal that the method is nothing more than a systematisation of syllogistic arguments. Every system of philosophy is based on a few fundamental

1 Caird, P. 121.

2 Ibid., P. 124.

3 Ibid., P. 127. Also cf. Joachim, *Study*, P. 13.

principles which cannot always be justified or explained further. All other conclusions are derived from them. Geometry affords to us an instance of that kind of thinking in which an attempt is made to lay down the fundamental presuppositions at the very outset. Geometry starts with open eyes and proceeds with such a rigour that difference of opinion is nowhere possible except at the beginning. Further, geometry illustrates to us how numberless ideas of which we are not even aware ordinarily can remain implicit in some half a dozen propositions. And above all, the geometrical method or mathematics in general is the best exemplar of that freedom from prejudice and sentimentalism, that spirit of disinterested, impersonal and objective pursuit of truth which has already been emphasised to be a necessary qualification of a philosopher.

Spinoza's utterance that truth would have remained hidden to "human race for all eternity, if mathematics had not furnished another standard of verity in considering solely the essence and properties of figures without regard to their final causes"¹ shows that he liked the geometrical method more for its freedom from teleology. Another point of attraction was its clarity and rigour ; his object in using the method was pedagogical and not philosophical. He makes a free use of appendices and notes and seems always anxious to make his point clear rather than to stick to the geometrical method. Sometimes he gives summaries too. Never does the method appear to be oppressive or obstructive. And though the geometrical method is good for all syllogistic reasoning it was particularly advantageous to Spinoza because of

¹ *Ethics*, Appendix to part I.

his denial of the freedom of will and teleology. Professor Wolfson suggests that it may be that he employed the method "in order to avoid the need of arguing against opponents"¹ and also "to avoid the temptation of citing Scripture."² The suggestion has little value in face of the fact that there is still room in the *Ethics* to cite the scripture and to discuss the opponents.

The geometrical method emphasizes also the due order of truth ; and in Spinoza's philosophy what is very important is that things should be seen in proper order and from proper perspective. The order of the sections in the *Ethics* is important. The geometrical method leaves a peculiar stamp on the reader's mind, so much so that it is said that "it is through its aesthetic value the most effective vehicle of thought."³ But the order of presentation must not be compared with the order of discovery. The distinction may be compared to what the Nyāya calls the *svārthanumāna* and *parārthanumāna*. The *svārthanumāna* may be only conjectured and it may well be, as Professor Wolfson suggests, that Spinoza arrived at his conclusions like the Rabbis and the Scholastics. Whatever the order of discovery, the point to be noted is that the geometrical method is only a literary form and nothing more than that.

1 Wolfson, Vol. I, P. 57.

2 Ibid., P. 59.

3 Howard Selsam *Studies in the History of Ideas*, Vol. III, P. 259.

CHAPTER II

THE RIGHT APPROACH TO SPINOZA (CONTD.)

I

Philosophy and History

Undue emphasis on history is bound to affect our judgment regarding Spinoza's indebtedness to others. The historical way of looking at Spinozism has prevented many scholars from appreciating the real merit and originality of Spinoza. The historical attitude is prone to follow even slight suggestions and similarities too much, and so, instead of improving our chances of understanding the philosopher, it mars them. The two big volumes of Prof. Wolfson on the Philosophy of Spinoza for which every student of Spinoza will be grateful to him and which stamp upon the reader the author's wide scholarship and unfailing acumen, unfortunately create the impression that the author has read a little too much between and behind the lines of Spinoza, and that perhaps because his scholarship is greater than that of Spinoza.

On the other hand, one finds many well-meaning exponents of Spinoza, unable to extricate themselves from a certain way of reading philosophy or the history of philosophy. They usually start, as Hallett remarks, with presuppositions of their own and unconsciously begin to read their own views in the system they study. In particular, the Hegelian way of looking at different systems of philosophy and their development, its Procrustean method of classifying systems together with the habit of trying to link them up in an organic manner,

has deprived many a philosopher of a correct understanding at the hands of his critics.¹

Caird is frankly a Neo-Hegelian and appears to demand Spinoza too to be the same. Most often Spinoza is criticised for not saying what the Hegelian logic requires. Caird does not refrain even from giving certain Hegelian turns and twists to Spinozism. The criterion of originality according to him is whether a system is an organic development of the past or not. An original thinker must follow the dialectical movement and must endeavour "to put and answer the question for the solution of which the age is pressing."² Thus the emphasis is more on the historical movement of thought than on the individual.

It is evident that if a system is approached with the above kind of bias the result will not be a true and impartial understanding and assessment of the system. The Hegelian emphasis on the dialectical movement seems to misconceive the object of philosophy totally. Philosophy has for its object the spiritual problem of freeing us from pain and of leading us to the eternal good. The success and originality of a system do not mean its capacity to fit in with a schemata but its capacity to make us spiritual. Philosophy is not made to order like a pair of trousers unless it is under the yoke of some sort of dictatorship. Philosophy being a search for the eternal

¹ Wolf remarks that it was really "under the influence of Hegel and the magic of Hegelian dialectic that it became the fashion to present the later phases of modern philosophy as a mere unfolding of its earlier phases. And so it came about that the philosophy of Spinoza, like that of Malebranche and others, was regarded merely as a form of Cartesianism" *Correspondence* (Introduction).

² Caird, P. 38.

good need not necessarily belong to any age or society, clan or country. That it should be part of an organic development and must follow the dialectical movement is a view that seems to regard philosophy merely as an intellectual adjustment, and not as a spiritual discipline intended to enable us to realise the Good. A philosopher is a failure if he does not give us a new method or scheme of life to attain the ideal. The view that philosophy is progressive implies that it is understood on the pattern of science which is more or less cumulative, and that no philosophy is complete in itself. What is worse is the baseless presupposition that the thought movement of the whole world is unilinear, proceeding in one direction and towards one goal.

The Hegelian view is a groundless evolutionism.¹ Such a view, however architectonic its scheme may be, is contrary to the aims and intentions of any philosophy. No philosophy can consent to being regarded as a part of some whole, nor does it ever surrender its claim to possess the whole truth. If Hegel is right in saying that a system of philosophy is only a moment in the dialectical movement of thought then Hegelianism itself will have to be regarded only as a moment, that is, only as partial truth and not as absolute truth. Hegelianism itself is thus in the grip of a nemesis.

Spinoza never wrote his philosophy as an answer to the pressing questions of the age, nor did he care for

¹ Cf. Guénon—*Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines*, Pp. 113-114. "It is absolutely impossible to make any discoveries in metaphysic.... evolution and progress have no place in metaphysic.... metaphysic is the very negation of evolution and progress."

the so-called dialectical movement of thought. For him philosophy was an answer to the inner spiritual urge to find the eternal good. Caird does notice this ; only he cannot get rid of his own point of view. To understand Spinoza rightly it is necessary to shake off the Hegelian dogma, and adopt a sort of what Hallett calls "methodological discipleship ;" because "besides adding gusto to the research it may provide counter bias to the tendency of minute scholars to fill the lacunae by means of principles and schemata that operate in their minds....."¹ Indeed understanding is intellectual love or freedom from prejudice and rigidity.

It is not however our aim to underrate the importance of the historical approach to a system of thought. Even though each system claims independence and completeness, yet there is a sense in saying that each system takes its shape in a particular background and atmosphere, and that it would not have been what it is but for its historical position. Every thinker finds himself amidst waves of thought from all sides and cannot help reacting to them. But it is always the particular mind that reacts. But for the rise of the dogmatic schools of Empiricism and Rationalism one does not know how and whether Kant would have been awakened from his dogmatic slumber. And but for Kant's *Critique*, it is difficult to imagine what shape the subsequent systems of Fichte and Hegel would have taken. But lest the importance of the historical factors should be over-emphasised, let it be noted that environment is not everything, that the kind of use that a thinker makes of his resources depends solely upon his genius and spiritual affinities. It was Kant alone and not any other of

¹ *Mind* LI, N. S. Pp. 135-136.

his contemporaries who was awakened from dogmatism. The importance of spiritual affinity is so great that one may go back to Plato and Plotinus for inspiration and brush aside the subsequent thought as uninspiring. The very fact that Spinoza chose only some and not other authors shows that there was already in him something which determined his choice. One does not imitate one's favourite authors necessarily but discovers one's own self through them. It is in this spirit that we have to see the way in which Spinoza assimilated the ideas he might have got from without, and for this, it may be helpful to us to draw attention to certain aspects of Spinoza's personality.

II

The Spiritual Rank of Spinoza

It has been said in the previous chapter that a really spiritual philosophy presupposes or requires a particular type of character. In this connection reference has also been made to the Hindu tradition of *adbikāribbada*. The implication of the tradition is that man's faith and inclinations depend upon his character. In the last resort the differences of our judgment are traceable to our character or the mental makeup. The *Bhagavad Gītā* affirms that faith is the man.¹ Philosophy is ultimately a revelation of one's character; for it is but an index of the system of values dear to one's heart. This, however, does not mean naturalism; because even our unconscious tendencies and inclinations are in the end traceable to conscious thought and evaluation.

¹ cf. *Gītā* XVII 3 Śraddhāmayo' yam puruṣaḥ. Also cf. the Bible 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.'

As already pointed out, in the West philosophy is generally taken to be purely an intellectual affair, and hence its relation to the individual's character is hardly cared for ; as if the intellect works independently of the heart or our set of values. In this, philosophy is not distinguished from science, an error on which the West prides itself. It is forgotten that all our views are consciously or unconsciously affected by our character or sense of values. The question of the relation of thought and character is particularly significant in the case of Spinoza, because he, unlike some of his contemporaries,¹ was a man of unflinching devotion to the spiritual ideal, and had the courage of his convictions. Neither the desire for money nor that for fame nor the desire to please any person or public could influence Spinoza's judgment or his love of truth.

In the West there seem to be no definite categories to indicate the different grades of the spiritual life, and so Spinoza is only vaguely praised but not accurately judged or placed. God-intoxicated, an atheist, a moralist, a saint—he is said to be all these. But if the characteristics of the different grades of men as given in the *Bhagavad Gītā* are kept in view, Spinoza can be placed almost mathematically. According to the *Gītā*-standard he occupies easily a very high place in the *sāttvika* scale

¹ Russell remarks about Leibniz that "to please a prince, to refute a rival philosopher, or to escape the censures of a theologian, he would take any pains." He preferred "a courtly to an academic career," and his "ambition, versatility, and the desire to influence particular men and women, all combined to prevent Leibniz from doing himself justice in connected exposition of his system."

Philosophy of Leibniz, Pp. 1-2. For similar remarks about Descartes, see Martineau *Types*, Vol I P. 247.

and approaches the very borders of *jīvanmukti*. A *sāttvika* man is not merely a man of high moral calibre ; he is spiritual. "The intelligence that perceives unity in difference is *sāttvika*¹." There is a pervasive sense of unity in the system of Spinoza ; unity is the dominating note of his thought. The concept of God controls his whole philosophy. Spinoza's love of unity palpably merges into mysticism which is unmistakable ; there is some point in the remark that Spinoza builds a "meta-physical calculus" only to enable us to sympathise with his mystic experience.

Inspite of his frequent use of the religious term 'God,' Spinoza was a philosopher rather than a religious man according to the distinction already made. His passionate devotion to truth is almost religious in its intensity, but on the intellectual and temperamental side Spinoza was a philosopher. His thoroughgoing rationalism together with his disbelief in miracles, his critical attitude towards the anthropomorphic conception of God and the teleological conception of creation, his intense *vairāgya* or freedom from desire, for enjoyment his uncompromising nature together with his catholicity,² all these and many other features of his personality stamp him only as a philosopher i.e., a *jñānī* and not a *bhakta*.

That he was not a *bhakta* by temperament does not mean that Spinoza was an atheist or any the less spiritual for that. His criticism of the conception of God does not imply any lack of faith in an ultimate spiritual principle. Lambert de Velthuyse in his letter to Jacob Ostens in which he reviews Spinoza's *Theologico-Political Treatise*

1 *Gita* XVIII, 20. Also XIV, 17.

2 *Correspondence* XXX, P. 206, XXI, P. 178.

remarks¹ that the author "secretly introduces Atheism." Spinoza answers that "Atheists are wont to desire inordinately honours and riches which I have always despised....." and appeals, "Does that man, I pray, cast aside all religion who declares that God must be recognised as the Highest Good, and that he must be loved as such with a free spirit ?" Spinoza was undoubtedly not a Theist but not irreligious. Religion cannot be identified with theism, nor does the rejection of theism mean atheism. Atheism really means lack of faith in the supreme good ; it means materialism.²

In the *Bhagavad Gītā* there is given a list of qualities that a spiritual man necessarily possesses, and in order to show that Spinoza was really spiritual by virtue of possessing those qualities, it is necessary to give the list. "Fearlessness, cleanness of life, steadfastness in the Yoga of wisdom, alms-giving, self-restraint, sacrifice, study of the scriptures, austerity and straight forwardness, harmlessness, truth, absence of wrath, renunciation, peacefulness, absence of crookedness, compassion to living beings, uncovetousness, mildness, fortitude, purity, absence of envy and pride—these are his who is born with divine properties, Bhārata."³ All these "divine properties are deemed to be for liberation."

To judge the character of a man we have to evaluate his deeds that spread over his life ; because it is in our deeds that we commit ourselves ; actions alone clinch

1 *Correspondence*, XLII Pp. 239-240.

2 Cf "The life of slothful respectable idleness or frivolity where the soul gives itself to nothing....that is atheism." A. C. Bradley, *Ideals of Religion*, P. 70.

3 *Gītā* XVI, 1-3.

our conflicts. Spinoza was a fearless man ; neither the fear of obloquy and odium nor of poverty nor even of death could daunt him. The greatest fear is the fear of death ; Spinoza knew that there were people who would not shrink from taking his life and actual assaults too were made, yet he did not flinch from his convictions.

Real freedom from fear arises only from real freedom from desires i.e., from true *vairāgya*. It is the desire for enjoyment that makes the spirit cringe. There are three fundamental desires or *eṣaṇās*¹ that bind the soul, namely, *lokeṣaṇā* (desire for fame), *putreṣaṇā* (desire for progeny) and *vitteṣaṇā* (desire for wealth). Spinoza was free from all these. His lifelong restraint from sex enjoyment is a virtue which can be more highly valued in India than anywhere else in the world. As regards money, Spinoza was extremely frugal in his habits and depended on grinding lenses for his livelihood. Not that he could not get money, he rejected an offer of two thousand Florins from his friend Simon de Vries ; similarly he refused to be his heir and suggested that the property should go to his brother. Again, the successor of Vries offered an annuity of five hundred Florins of which Spinoza accepted only three hundred. Spinoza's resistance to temptation is revealed better by some other facts of his life. He declined the offer of the chair of philosophy at the University of Heidelberg merely from the 'Love of peace.' The jewish church secretly tried to tempt him with money, but Spinoza treated the offer as it should be. Finally, when his unworthy sister filed a suit against him in order to nullify his claim to his father's property, he fought the case, won it and returned

1 cf. *Br. Up.* III, 5.

the whole property to the wicked sister thereby exhibiting his saintly freedom from lowliness. Spinoza was equally free from what is called 'the last infirmity of noble minds.' He knew that the desire for fame is the subtlest enemy and compels "its votaries to order their lives according to the opinions of their fellowmen."¹ and not according to truth. Spinoza was truly free from *bhokṣṛtvābbhimāna* (the desire for enjoyment). This is also evident from his confessions in the first paragraphs of *De Intellectus Emendatione*.

Spinoza was aware of the 'disillusionment that had taken place in his mind and also the good towards which he was feeling his way. There was a little conflict and some uncertainty² before the final decision, but soon Spinoza overcame all that ; because 'spiritual uncertainty itself is a kind of certainty.' He did not give up worldly pursuits with any sense of self-sacrifice but with the consciousness that they are worthless and that they had to be given up in any case. He was aware that the real good is neither continuous nor co-ordinate with the worldly good, because the two are so opposed that the former should possess the mind "singly to the exclusion of all else." When convinced that he would be leaving "certain evils for certain good," it became the paramount problem of his life to discover the eternal and infinite good that may fill the mind wholly with joy. All this speaks for the ardently spiritual nature of the man.

Besides the spirit of renunciation and love of wisdom, we find in Spinoza forgiveness and fortitude, absence of fear and fickleness, of passion and pride. His love of

1 *Emendatione*, P. 2.

2 *Ibid*, Pp. 1-2.

solitude, his simple life, his extreme care to avoid injury to others,¹ his reluctance to criticise others, his readiness to accept the consequences of his deeds, his unflinching love of truth together with his dove-like gentleness—all these go to mark him as a saint.

It is this character that gives a peculiar flavour to Spinoza's philosophy. That virtue is its own reward and vice its own punishment, that God should be loved disinterestedly, that the wise man does not fear death, are all maxims or mottos of his life and are assimilated in the body of his philosophy. One may even venture to suggest that Spinoza's crusade against anthropomorphism and teleology is just an expression of his character; the fervour behind his arguments is indicative of his spiritual passion and freedom from desires and is not merely intellectual. Intellect always discovers and devises arguments for what it likes and loves to hold. Spinoza knows that the arguments of his opponents are not objective and unmotivated; therefore besides advancing counter arguments, he tries to uncover their motives. Regarding final causes, he says that since men "do everything for an end which is that which is useful for themselves.....they look for the final causes of whatsoever happens....."² As regards teleology he urges that "since they discover both within and without themselves, a multitude of means which contribute not a little to the attainment of what is profitable to themselves, they come to look upon all natural objects as means for their obtaining what is profitable to themselves."³ All this means that if only men were free from the desire

1 cf. *Correspondence* XV, P. 135.

2 *Ethics* Appendix to Part I.

3 *Ibid.*

for enjoyment, their desires would not colour their conceptions as they do in religion where the desire for enjoyment is not necessarily absent or true love for God has not yet developed. Anthropomorphism may be allowed in religion, but certainly not in philosophy. It is only our hopes and fears and the human way of looking at the divine that are at the root of anthropomorphism. Philosophy requires a real seeker of truth (*jijñāsu*) and not a man of desires (*ārta* or *arthārthī*). Spinoza was a real *jijñāsu* who is never deviated by considerations of worldly life. The unworthiness of his sisters, the murderous attack on his person, his excommunication, and many other bitter experiences of life ought to have led him either to misanthropy or to pessimism, but they could not. The reason is that Spinoza was a man of real renunciation. It is only men of strong attachments, men who cherish high hopes that become pessimists and misanthropes when their hopes are cruelly frustrated. Spinoza had no desires, no expectations from the world, not even from God.

III

Spinoza and the Jewish Rationalists

Spinoza was born a Jew, and naturally he had to study the Hebrew scriptures. These scriptures like all others contain many things which either one has to accept on faith or one has to rationalise to one's satisfaction. As already pointed out, Spinoza was not a man of absolute faith but a critical rationalist. He therefore tried to seek intellectual satisfaction through the rationalists of his own community, namely, Maimonides and Crescas; much before Spinoza the spirit of rational interpretation

had entered Judaism. His study of Maimonides and Crescas only encouraged his spirit of free enquiry and he found that they too could not give him entire satisfaction. While he was trying thus to settle his mind regarding religious and philosophical issues, he came in contact with Van den Ende who was a scientist and a thorough rationalist. Spinoza studied Latin with this man for about two years during which period his rationalism, resulting in his separation from the Jewish religion, seems to have become complete. Having learnt Latin, Spinoza turned to the study of the most-talked-of philosopher, namely, Descartes who seems to have interested him for some time. Spinoza had his Cartesian friends with a few of whom he discussed and to some of whom he taught Cartesianism. But in the end Cartesianism too disappointed him and the philosopher was obliged to find out his own way. The result of the endeavour was the *Ethics* in which is found Spinoza's maturest thought. The maturity of his thought is to be seen even from the year 1661 in his letters to his numerous friends until the time of his death. This in brief is the history of Spinoza's mental growth and of his contact with different thinkers.

It is evident that Spinoza's early acquaintance with Maimonides could not have been without effect on his undeveloped mind. When Spinoza was eagerly seeking a rational line of thought through the maze of Jewish theology, it must have been a great relief to him to come across Maimonides who makes great efforts to present Judaism rationally ; he must have read him sympathetically. This, however, does not mean that Spinoza must have swallowed Maimonides wholly, because one finds in him a tendency for independent thinking already

There are many points of difference between Spinoza and Maimonides. The latter's philosophy is essentially dualistic; the fundamental difference between the finite and the infinite is maintained and the idea of an immanent God is not even suggested. Maimonides believes in 'free will' and even "free creation" and the consequence is that his conception of evil remains fundamentally defective. Lastly, instead of distinguishing philosophy and theology, Maimonides tries to reconcile the two, and fails. It might well be that the failure of rationalist thinkers to reconcile the two, philosophy and revelation, led Spinoza to the view that the two cannot be harmonised and hence they must be distinguished. The *Theologico Political Treatise* of Spinoza has for its purpose mainly the distinction of Theology and Philosophy. The scripture was not intended to teach philosophy or sciences but obedience alone. Spinoza holds that scripture must be interpreted with the help of scripture and not reason. Reason is neither aidant nor subordinate to scripture. The very fundamental dogma of theology that man is saved by obedience cannot be demonstrated by reason; it is a matter of faith in the scripture or revelation.¹ Spinoza mentions² Maimonides and also some other Rabbis and criticises them for denying autonomy to reason; for "who can receive or adopt into his mind anything against which reason rebels?" The dogmas of faith are not doctrines of philosophy; for they are not determined by reason; they are accepted "only in so far as is requisite for obedience."³ This distinction wins

1 *Supra*, P. 16. Footnote 2.

2 *Theologico*, P. 260.

3 *Ibid.*, P. 264.

for Spinoza the freedom of reason to speculate without any fear of infringing upon the domain of religion.

But inspite of differences, the influence of Maimonides on Spinoza is unmistakable. There is a complete agreement regarding their criticism of anthropomorphism, and both reject final causes. But there is a point of difference regarding God's corporeality and determinism. Hints for these seem to have come to Spinoza from Crescas who believed that extension is infinite and belongs to Divine nature.¹ In a general way Spinoza too may be said to be a determinist like Crescas, but there is a difference. *The determinism of Spinoza reigns only within the realm of effects* i.e., modes, and leaves God free. Of Crescas and Maimonides, the influence of the latter on Spinoza is more marked. In opposition to Caird, Wolfson² and Roth agree in this. "The reasoned attacks on anthropomorphism, the insistence that a sound ethics is impossible without psychology on the one hand and physical science on the other, the making of the idea of God the foundation of the scientific inquiry, the definite and extreme nominalism, the rejection of the final causes, the theory of imagination and error, these and many other ideas afterwards to be woven into the fabric of Spinozism, appear with utmost clearness and terseness in Maimonides."³

1 cf. Crescas' *Critique of Aristotle* by H. A. Wolfson (Harvard Semitic series), P. 123. Also P. 36.

2 Wolfson, Vol. I, P. 19.... "Of all authors quoted or referred to in this work, it is only Maimonides and Descartes and indirectly through them, and quite as often directly through his own works also Aristotle, that can be said to have had a dominant influence upon the philosophic training of Spinoza and to have guided him in the formation of his own philosophy."

3 Roth, *Spinoza*, Pp. 225-226.... Also cf., his book, *Spinoza Descartes and Maimonides*, Pp. 143-145.

IV Minor Influences

There is to be found an element of mysticism in Spinoza. His emphasis on the fundamental unity of things, his doctrine of the three kinds of knowledge and his conception of the love of God, of eternity and immortality—all these point in the same direction. There is great controversy regarding the source from which these ideas may be said to have entered Spinoza's mind. Caird emphasises¹ the influence of the *Cabbala*, but Prof. Wolfson² and Pollock propose a different view and suggest that these ideas bear the mark of Neo-Platonism on Spinoza. Roth however is uncertain.³

The fact is that there are certain ideas that are to be found both in Neo-Platonism as well as in the Cabbalistic literature; Cabbalists too like Neo-Platonists believe in "emanationism" and in the three grades of knowledge. The difference is that the former is clothed in mythology while the latter is pure philosophy, and the difference is significant because mythologies may be interpreted in ever so many ways. The influence of the *Cabbala* becomes more doubtful in view of the fact that Spinoza was against extracting philosophy out of religious

1 Caird, P. 53.

2 *The Philosophy of Spinoza* Vol. I, P. 17.

3 Roth, Pp. 226-227.... "It may have been through Bruno. It may have been through the Hebrew Cabbalists, who are through and through Neo-Platonic.... It may have been through Philo himself, the study of whom had been brought into Jewish circles a century before. It may have been just one of the common ideas of the day...."

mythologies. Pollock points out that the "doctrines of emanation and transmigration of soul are both fundamental in the Cabbalistic mythologies" and that these doctrines "are both fundamental in the Cabbalistic account of the world, and are both utterly incompatible with Spinoza's metaphysics."¹

Spinoza did not know Greek, and it has not been possible to fix upon the exact source through which Neo-Platonism influenced him; he is at many points critical of Platonism also, still the similarity of Spinozism and Neo-Platonism is striking.² Regarding the conception of the Absolute itself both assert that the Absolute is both transcendent and immanent, indeterminate and infinite, simple and unique, beyond one and the many. Spinoza criticises the theory of emanation on the ground that matter cannot emanate from spirit or that one substance cannot originate from another. This criticism cannot apply to Neo-Platonism if it is taken to believe in what the Vedānta calls *vivartavāda*; and in fact Neo-Platonism did believe in the falsity of the empirical world. The similarity of the process of evolution through gradual stages in both cases is as evident as the resemblance in their theory of the three grades of knowledge. The intellectual love of God in Spinoza is strongly suggestive of the 'ecstasy' of Neo-Platonism, but the difference is not negligible. Spinoza does not very explicitly speak of the unity of the self with the Infinite though he talks

1 Pollock, P. 93

2 Ibid., P.293....."The metaphysical foundations of the system appear to have been derived by some road not fully known from Neo-Platonism, and it is said by the best authorities that the very terms bear the marks of imitation from the Greek."

of mind's eternity. The mystic element exhibited in the last section of the *Ethics* seems to be more an evidence of Spinoza's own experience than of any dependence on some other thinker.

Though it is natural to be impressed by the similarity of Spinoza's thought with some of the utterances of Bruno, still it is not proper to stress the relation too much. Bruno was a poet, and his conception of the unity of the universe, his experience of the Divine pulsating in the nerves of the world is more a poetic flight than the reasoned position of a philosopher. His pantheism is more an ecstatic experience than an absolutism. Spinoza was a cool thinker and not a sentimentalist like Bruno. It is true that Bruno in his revolt against authority and the conception of a transcendent God, in his emphasis on the divinity of man and unity of substance, represents the spirit of the times, but it would be too much to infer from that Spinoza's indebtedness to him, particularly in the absence of any evidence.

V

Spinoza and Descartes

There is great controversy regarding Spinoza's indebtedness to Descartes. Opinion is divided between Wolf and Roth on the one hand, and Caird, Martineau, Wolfson and Pollock on the other. We have already¹ noted the remarks of Wolfson; Pollock admits that Spinozism is not Cartesianism, but says that it would not have been what it is without Descartes.² Similarly, Caird holds that "the solution of the problem of

¹ *Supra* Footnote, P. 50.

² Pollock, P. 85.

philosophy to which he (Spinoza) was led was logically involved in and grew out of the teaching of Descartes."¹ The positive influence of Descartes on Spinoza is said to be the scientific aspect of his philosophy while his negative reaction to him is felt to be his monism. So far all this may be intelligible, but we are puzzled when we find Roth asserting the following. "Our thesis is that if the philosophy of Descartes be re-examined in the light of its own logical premises, it can be shown to have resulted, even according to Descartes' own admissions, in a pluralistic scepticism against which the whole of Spinoza's work is one continued and conscious protest."² It is obvious that a particular view depends not only on how we interpret Spinozism but also on our interpretation of Cartesianism. We will therefore try to see in brief the truth of the matter for ourselves, because there is no doubt that Spinoza was for a long time occupied with Descartes in his ripe years.

The first thing that strikes us is that Descartes does not show that spiritual unrest of Spinoza which the very first paragraphs of his *De Intellectus Emendatione* reveal. After being disillusioned about the worldly ambitions—money and fame—Spinoza starts to find the eternal Good to which he could direct his whole attention. For Descartes theology was enough, and he wrote his philosophy, it appears,³ in order to convince the impious of the reality of soul and God. This is hardly the spirit of philosophy. Like a true philosopher Spinoza distinguished theology from philosophy and said that while

1 Caird, P. 38.

2 Roth, *Mind* XXXII NS, P. 12.

3 cf., The First paragraph of the Dedication to his *Meditations*.

the former was meant for the simple minds who could believe and obey, the latter was the individual's independent search for the Highest Good. The difference in their point of view is fundamental and speaks for itself. Descartes' conclusions were already formed, but Spinoza entered upon a free inquiry.

Descartes professed to follow the method of free inquiry by following the method of doubt, but he could scarcely see how much he was taking for granted without doubting. It is true that doubting itself cannot be doubted, but to pass from doubting to the doubter is a great leap; it presupposes the principle of causation, but Descartes could not see it and so could much less doubt it. Now that he had stumbled upon one indubitable truth, he proceeded to lay down the criterion of true ideas. A true idea must be clear and distinct. Do we have any other idea which is as clear and distinct as the *Cogito ergo sum*? Such an idea is the idea of God or Infinite Being. He does not care to show that this idea is clear and distinct but proceeds to prove the existence of God on the basis of this idea. Having established God as the creator of the world and as the repository of all truth, Descartes finds an easy way out of solipsism. He can posit the existence and reality of the external world also, because if it were false and unreal God would be a deceiver. "It is almost comical to see how he strains at a gnat and swallows a camel; how he declines to believe in the reality of observed objects, yet readily accepts the reality of a Supernatural Deity whom he promptly burdens with the responsibility for all Cartesian beliefs and fancies."¹

¹ Wolf, *Correspondence* (Introduction), P. 26.

Regarding 'mind' Descartes says : ".....if I had only ceased to think, although all other objects which I had ever imagined had been in reality existent, I would have had no reason to believe that I existed ; I thence concluded that I was a substance whose essence or nature consists only in thinking."¹ It is impossible to know from this why Descartes calls mind substance ; Gibson suggests that he "links substantiality and distinctness," because 'A substance is defined through its own essence; and this is impossible unless the essence is conceived distinctly.'² It is difficult to see how substantiality and distinctness can be linked and how *petitio principii* can be avoided. Can it be held that whatever is distinct is a substance ? No doubt Descartes does understand substance as something self-conceived, and regards both mind and matter as substances ; but what is puzzling is that at the same time God also is termed substance. The difference between mind and matter on the one hand and God on the other is that while the latter is self-conceived and self-existent, the former are created substances. If so, mind cannot be regarded as self-conceived. As to the question that if mind and body are so independent of each other how knowledge or movement is possible, it is said that all this is possible through the pineal gland which is the point of contact between body and mind. Descartes ascribes freedom of will not only to God but also to created beings and says that error is to be accounted for by the fact that human will is free and wider in scope than intellect.

From this short summary of Cartesianism it can be

1 *Discourse on Method* IV.

2 *The Philosophy of Descartes*, Pp. 93-94.

seen that the positive influence of Descartes on Spinoza cannot be said to be much. Spinoza no doubt might have felt attracted by the grand ambition to find an indubitable starting point for philosophy, something from which every thing could be mathematically derived. But after having entered into Cartesianism he must have been greatly disappointed. The intellectualistic motive of Descartes, his belief that theology and philosophy teach the same thing, his half-hearted acceptance of mind and matter as substances, his uncritical and anthropomorphic conception of God, his dogmatic dependence on the veracity of God for demonstrating the reality of empirical objects, and the scepticism inherent in it, his ingenious solution of the problem of mind and matter through the mediation of the pineal gland, and above all, his ascription of freedom to both the creator and the created, could not have appealed to Spinoza very much. Spinoza summarises his criticism of Bacon and Descartes like this : "The first, then, and the greatest error, is that they (Bacon and Descartes) have strayed so far from the knowledge of the first cause and of the origin of all things. The second is that they did not know the true nature of the human mind. The third is that they never arrived at the true cause of Error."¹ Descartes' failure to see that human freedom limits God's freedom shows his wrong conception of creation ; his belief that the will is wider than the intellect shows his wrong conception of mind, and his attribution of error to free will introduces scepticism. We agree with Roth when he says : "For the rational investigation of phenomena we need to be assured of two things, first, that we have the ability to reason, and second, that the universe is such that we

¹ *Correspondence* II, P. 76.

can reason about it. The first was denied by Descartes' subordination of intellect to will in man, the second by his affirmation of the incomprehensibility of the universe, which is only another aspect of the subordination of intellect to will in God."¹

There are, nevertheless, some three or four points of Cartesian philosophy which might have interested Spinoza. Descartes' attempt to find the criterion of truth within thought and not outside it is sure to have impressed itself upon a staunch rationalist like Spinoza. Thought cannot be judged *ab extra*, and if truth is not found hidden in and behind thought, the mind does not know what it can do in the matter. On the metaphysical side the conception of substance as what is self-conceived and self-existent is accepted by Spinoza, and together with it, the conception of mind as thinking and matter as extended is also incorporated. But while Spinoza draws out the logical implications of all these, in Descartes they are neither consistently adhered to, nor are their implications worked out. The hiatus between mind and matter on the one hand, and that between God and the universe on the other is filled up by a religious conception, namely, that of absolute creation by a transcendent God. The problem of the relation between the finite and infinite is not even clearly formulated, much less solved. Spinoza has raised the issue and has also tried to solve it in some way. But whether or not Spinoza is much indebted to Descartes for metaphysical ideas, he is definitely influenced by the latter in his scientific ideas. "Without going back to the Cartesian theory of dynamics, Spinoza's account of the material world is

not intelligible."¹ Martineau seems to exaggerate matters when he says that excepting the theory of determinism and that of the identity of God and Nature or the actual and the possible, Spinozism is "a large reproduction of Descartes, his (Spinoza's) proofs for the existence of God from the idea of God, the duality of substance, the synchronism of body and mind, the relation between understanding and will, the immortality of the soul, and above all, a psychology of the passions the list of which is, as Sigwart says, almost a servile copy."² This view of the relation of Spinoza to Descartes is based, as will be evident in the sequel, on an incorrect understanding of Spinoza. Spinoza does not believe in the duality of substance nor is his solution of the problem of mind and matter Cartesian. And no where is Spinoza so little indebted to Descartes as in his theory of the immortality of soul; Spinoza's peculiar conception of the enjoyment of bliss which is associated with the eternity of the mind is not to be found in Descartes.

VI

Spinoza's Originality

From the various accounts of Spinoza's indebtedness to others it might appear that Spinozism is merely a fabric woven out of numerous borrowed trends. The rationalistic element is traced to Maimonides, the mystic element to Neo-Platonism, pantheism to Bruno and the rest is traceable to Descartes. Spinoza's work seems to be only a kind of systematisation of these various lines of thought. The question naturally arises: Is there nothing

¹ Pollock, P. 101.

² Martineau *Types*, Vol. I, P. 261.

which may be said to be Spinoza's own ? If there is, what is that ?

Prof. Wolfson devotes the last chapter of his second volume to a discussion of what is new in Spinoza. His contention is that the most important contribution of Spinoza is his endeavour to make the unity of the universe complete. The unity of nature though a long envisaged truth was not yet a completely established theory. There are four points at which this unity was weak and a gap was felt. Firstly, there used to be a distinction between the matter of heavenly bodies and that of terrestrial bodies. But this distinction was completely overthrown by the time of Descartes. Homogeneity of matter was established. Still there was the distinction between God and the universe ; even Descartes' God was a transcendent being and different from the created universe in substance. Spinoza removed this gap by declaring that God is the substantial cause of the universe and that thought and extension are His attributes. Thus homogeneity not only of matter but of the whole universe was achieved. Secondly, there was the traditional distinction between the laws of nature and the will of God. It was not possible to know what God could do and undo ; God was a power above nature. Spinoza denied teleology and made the uniformity of nature universal ; God's will was declared to be nothing more than the laws of nature. The logical implications of these two assertions are mainly two : that the soul is nothing apart from the body and that man is not a kingdom within a kingdom i.e. there is no such thing as the freedom of will. The doctrine of the separability of body and soul and that of the freedom of will were the other two great hindrances in conceiving nature

as one and uniform. With the denial of these, all the factors that weakened the unity of nature disappeared, and it was for the first time conceived to be one uniform whole without any gap in it. The ascription of Thought and Extension to God, the denial of teleology, the assertion of the inseparability of body and soul and the denial of freedom in man are the four acts of daring according to Prof. Wolfson.¹

As regards the concept of God, the Professor seems to think that Spinoza does not tell us any thing new except inadvertently or unconsciously. Spinoza's constant endeavour is "to accommodate his philosophy to the traditional conceptions." This is evident from his ascription of infinity to God. Wolfson holds that if Spinoza regards the Universe to be intelligible to reason, then he cannot consistently admit infinite attributes unknown to us. There are four chief characteristics of substance: Substance is a transcendent whole, it is causeless, it is the cause of the universe, and it is infinite. The first three of these characteristics may be said to have some logical justification, but as regards the fourth, namely, God's infinity, Spinoza, Prof. Wolfson suggests,² does not give any logical argument. Even his proofs for the existence of God do not assume our knowledge of him as infinite but only as 'essence involving existence' as 'necessary existence *per se*' and as 'most powerful.' Still Spinoza ascribes infinity to God. "The fact is," says the Professor, "that it is not logical reasons but rather psychological ones that we must look for in trying to explain Spinoza's

1 Wolfson Vol. II, Pp. 332-339.

2 Ibid. Vol. II, P. 343.

characterisations of substance.”¹ The psychological reason is Spinoza’s anxiety and endeavour to show that he is not breaking away from the traditional theology. It is for this reason that he is said to have brought in the above conception. Wolfson argues away the suggestion that at least Spinoza’s denial of personality to God may be regarded as a radical departure from tradition. “Spinoza seems to have been under the delusion that he was merely spinning on the traditions of religion.....”² Spinoza’s desire to accommodate himself to tradition is said to be further confirmed by his treatment of the dictates of reason³ and also of immortality.⁴ In spite of his determinism Spinoza is anxious to show that man is not deprived of his powers to win immortality. Similarly, he tries to give a religious tinge to the mere fact of the indestructibility of mind by holding that it is not an accomplished fact but something to be attained; consistently he could not say so.

It is evident that Wolfson’s view of Spinoza’s originality or ‘departures’ depends much on his interpretation of Spinoza. It is in a sense possible to agree to Prof. Wolfson’s first contention, namely, that Spinoza made the conception of the unity of nature perfect and consistent. But his contention that Spinoza tried to harmonise his concepts with tradition is questionable. It is possible to understand the materiality of God, the infinity of substance, the inseparability of body and mind, the eternity of mind, the denial of personality to God in

1 Wolfson, Vol. II, P. 344.

2 Ibid., P. 347.

3 Ibid. P. 348.

4 Ibid., P. 350.

such a manner that Spinoza might appear to be most radical. Wolfson's fundamental prejudice seems to be his belief that Thought and Extension are *real* attributes of God. We call it a prejudice because the reality of attributes militates against not only the unity and infinity of substance but also against other doctrines of Spinoza.

The contention that Spinoza's characterisation of substance as infinite is owing to his desire to accommodate himself to tradition appears to us to be wholly groundless. Spinoza, as his letter to Blyenbergh shows, was never under the delusion that he "was spinning on the traditions of religion." The *Theologico-Political Treatise* was written mainly to distinguish theology and philosophy. Spinoza was quite aware of his departures and was sure not of his agreement with the tradition but only of the essentially spiritual nature of his philosophy.¹ Spinoza's denial of personality to God was as deliberate as his ascription of infinity to God was logical. His conception of God's causality is really his own. Substance as the most indeterminate Being must be *absolutely* infinite and as such must have of necessity infinite attributes. This does not, as will be shown in the sequel, argue any unintelligibility of the universe or agnosticism. Similarly Spinoza's views regarding the dictates of reason and immortality are governed not by psychological motives but by logical arguments. Wolfson by trying to present Spinoza as less radical than he was seems to surrender the whole case for him.

Spinoza's first contribution to philosophy is the form and orientation that he gave to it. His emphasis on

¹ *Correspondence* LXXVI, P. 352. "I do not presume that I have found the best philosophy, but I know that I think the true one."

the impersonal and non-sentimental pursuit of truth resulting in the fundamental distinction of philosophy from religion is of great importance, particularly in view of the numerous confusions found in the systems of Descartes, Leibnitz etc. who failed to recognize that distinction. Further, Spinoza drew attention to the fact that philosophy was not merely an intellectual systematisation of one's ideas but the discovery of the Good, and that its legitimate end is a way of life leading us to the realisation of that Good. Finally, Spinoza insisted on our looking at things in the 'proper order'. He stressed that philosophy in order to have right perspective must begin with the idea of God and that everything else should be investigated in the light of that idea and not vice versa. This picture of philosophy is wholly Spinoza's own.

Another aspect of Spinoza's philosophy which deserves recognition is its organic unity and its spiritual outlook. In the western systems of thought generally ethics seems to be only an appendix to metaphysics and is not logically and organically connected with it. On the one hand metaphysics does not necessarily culminate in ethics, i.e., does not lead us to a way of life. On the other, attempts to formulate moral theories independently of metaphysics are made; ethics does not seem to presuppose a metaphysics. Both of these features betray a failure to conceive the philosophical problem correctly. Spinoza is one of those rare philosophers of the west for whom philosophy is essentially a spiritual discipline. As in the Sāṃkhya and the Vedānta, in Spinozism also, knowledge alone is enough for freedom.¹

¹ Etienne Gilson : cf. *God and Philosophy*, P. 100, Spinozism "is one hundred per cent metaphysically pure answer to the question how to achieve human salvation by means of philosophy only."

The doctrinal contribution of Spinoza to Philosophy may be summarised in one word, that is, the concept of the Absolute. Spinoza may be said to have made this concept complete and consistent. All other doctrines may be regarded as the logical derivatives of this. Once Spinozism comes to be regarded as an absolutism, his criticism of teleology and of anthropomorphism, his theory of attributes and modes, and finally his view of the place of man in the universe and his destiny—all these become intelligible, and fit in with each other like the different parts of a machine. God, the supreme reality, was since long recognised to be the Absolute, but its logical implications were not noticed fully.

God as the Absolute must be both epistemologically and ontologically independent ; this is to say that God is self-conceived and self-existent. No other entity or existence can be posited without at the same time tampering with His absoluteness ; God must be admitted to be the universal reality. Being universal, God must also be absolutely indeterminate and infinite, because there is nothing which can set limit to or make Him determinate. All determination is negation. And since the finite or the *conditioned* necessarily presupposes the infinite or the *unconditioned*, the Absolute must also be regarded as the cause or ground of phenomena. The Absolute is not a hypothetical concept but the necessary existence or the necessary implicate of the universe. This is not to say that the Absolute is understood in relation to the finite ; it only means that the Absolute must be understood as the negation of the finite. Since the conditioned is not self-supporting and must be rejected, the affirmation of the unconditioned is necessary. God is therefore absolutely infinite and indeterminate, unique and universal, self-

evident and necessary being. Evidently then God cannot be regarded as a Person or creation as purposive.

The world of phenomena must be regarded then as merely an appearance and not as real. Since the real is changeless, all change has to be understood as illusory or subjective. Both Thought and Extension the modes of which make the world of appearance should be regarded as subjective or as intellectual ascriptions to the Absolute. These attributes, to the extent they *personate* the Absolute, appear as infinite and real. The Absolutely infinite is only a negation or dissolution of the relatively infinite, i.e., the attributes. Thus Spinoza on the one hand pulls down Thought and Extension from the status of substance to that of attributes, and on the other, he denies any difference of status between the two attributes. Thought is not superior to Extension. The one thing that we miss here in Spinoza is a clear and explicit theory of illusion. Though he speaks of the world as belonging to imagination and opinion, he does not elaborate the theory behind it, as is done in the Vedānta.

In his treatment of the problem of creation, Spinoza realises that it is not logical to proceed immediately from the Absolutely indeterminate to the utterly determinate, and hence he recognises different gradual stages of determination such as Immediate infinite modes, mediate infinite modes, and finite modes. It is necessary to show this process of creation if it is to be held that the world is nothing but a determination of the indeterminate that is immanent in it. The Absolute is immanent in the world as the ground of it and transcendent to it as indeterminate. In this connection a Vedāntin might like to know the distinction between the Absolute as

such and the Absolute as modified by Attributes. The Vedanta makes this distinction by bringing in the concept of *Saguna Brahman* or *Isvara* and tries to harmonise religion and philosophy ; but Spinoza seems to have altogether dispensed with the idea of a personal God, perhaps because of his contention that religion and philosophy are absolutely distinct.

The most remarkable idea that Spinoza appears to have introduced is regarding the ultimate destiny of man. In all the three semitic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, man is not immortal by nature; he has to win immortality by obedience to the Lord. Spinoza points out that each one of us is in essence eternal. Still, in order that we may enjoy *beatitude*, we have to attain it through knowledge and virtue. In this, Spinoza may be said to agree with Vedāntism. Vedānta argues that if we are not already immortal we cannot be so by any endeavour. Our eternity must therefore be a fact. But since we have forgotten it we are liable to passions ; we must attain or win back the consciousness of eternity. These contentions that have been briefly stated here will be logically expounded in the following chapters.

CHAPTER III

SUBSTANCE

I

Spinozism is Absolutism

The modern era in Europe is said to begin with a freedom of thought unknown in the Middle Ages. This freedom of thought was only "a denial of the existing order of things and a protest against it"; it was only a revolt against tradition and not the freedom of reason from its handicaps ; confusion in the realm of thought was wrongly attributed to the pressure of tradition. With a right orientation it would have been seen that what interferes with the freedom of reason in its pursuit of truth is some factor in the constitution of our mind itself rather than something external to it. It could have been found out that the root of the evil is our sentimentalism which prevents reason from being rigorous and impersonal, thereby making room for dogma and superstition. Since the real malady was not discovered, European thought essentially remained what it was before the modern era ; philosophy could not free itself from sentimentalism which characterised the religious thought of the Middle Ages ; the torch-bearers of the modern era could not go beyond the Christian Theism. It is only in Spinoza that freedom from the religious sentimentalism or the theistic tendency is found. And so his philosophy must be approached in an altogether different manner ; it should be regarded neither as theism nor as pantheism nor as atheism but as Absolutism.

An absolutism in general, it may be pointed out, is that system of philosophy in which the reality of the absolute is affirmed and that of the relative is denied. It is this feature that can be said to be common to the various types of Absolutism, namely, the Vedāntic, the Neo-Platonic, the Mādhyamika etc. An absolutism is not mere monism or pantheism which simply asserts the unity of things or oneness of reality and does not reject the relative or the phenomena. Monism and pantheism emphasise immanence, theism emphasises transcendence but an absolutism emphasises both. The Hegelian absolute is claimed to absorb the relative too, but there also, the relative as it appears to us is not accepted. Consistently the relative can find no place in the Absolute without affecting its absoluteness.

The affirmation of the absolute and the denial of the relative are one and the same thing. This is why some systems like the Mādhyamika are satisfied with mere denial, while others like the Neo-Platonic are particular mostly about the affirmation. With this difference of emphasis there may be said to be two types of absolutism : the one may be called Intuitive and the other Dialectical. The intuitive knowledge of the Absolute is the basis of the former. It is as if the Absolute reveals itself with the suddenness of a flash, and in the light of the flash the *appearance* of the Absolute disappears, i.e., the world is found to be merely an appearance or illusory. In this path there is first affirmation and then negation. But this intuition is possible only when the mind is free from its attachment to the world, is free from its inherent sentimentalism, i.e., when the mind is pure. When the mystics speak of the One as the real and the many as false they depend upon this inner experience, and not on

any critical analysis of experience. In Neo-Platonism we do not seem to have much of dialectic and criticism, but there is a correct conception of the Absolute. In the Upaniṣads we get an indication of both the methods; statements like 'not this, not this' etc.,¹ seem to indicate the dialectical method while statements such as all this is Brahman etc.,² show the direct path. The dialectical method consists essentially in the awareness of subjectivity. Analysis reveals that any concept which is universalised becomes riddled with contradictions. The inherent self-contradiction of all the concepts of reason leads us to an awareness of them as merely subjective and hence to an utter rejection of them. It then becomes imperative to discover what is beyond all concepts, the *Unconditioned*. The absolute, if it is to be free from self-contradiction, must be beyond all concepts or the subjective. In this method therefore an awareness of the antinomies of reason is indispensable. The Mādhyamika system is the best example of it. In any case, what is to be noted is that the two methods differ only regarding their emphasis on affirmation and negation; in either the world is illusory.

Spinozism also must be, in order to be correctly understood, treated as Absolutism. On the one hand Spinoza rejects the conception of a theistic God and absolute creation; and on the other he regards the empirical world as the world of opinion and imagination. The absolutely infinite and indeterminate Substance is, according to him, the sole cause and the only reality of the universe. So his system is neither theism nor a mere monism, but an absolutism. It is true that

1 *Neti neti, neha nānāsti kiñcana, naiṣa tarkeṇa matirāpameyā.*

2 *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma, ayaṁ ātmā Brahma.*

there is no dialectic or criticism of experience in his system, still there is in it an awareness of the subjective elements that interfere with a true vision of things ; and there is also the contention that at a particular level of consciousness which is attainable by us, i.e., in *scientia intuitiva*, our vision of things changes radically. Moreover, though we do not find in his system a critique of experience, yet criticism is not quite lacking. As a matter of fact, Spinoza seems to have evolved his system mainly out of a criticism of others. His attention was directed towards systems and not towards experience.¹ But since his criticism does not rise to the dialectical level and since his emphasis is more on intuition than on reflection, it would be truer to say that his absolutism is more like the Upaniṣadic or the Neo-Platonic type than the Śankarite or the Mādhyamika type. Like the Upaniṣadic Ṛṣis, Spinoza also says that Absolute pervades the universe and is yet beyond it ; substance cannot be said to be outside the universe, and yet being absolutely indeterminate it is also not identical with it. It is beyond all thought and speech and is known only in intuition ; "we can form no general idea of His essence."² Since all determination is negation, according to Spinoza, his substance must be understood as pure identity, as absolutely indeterminate ; it is also *causa sui* (*svayambhū*) and self-conceived (*svayamprakāśa*).

The comparison of Spinozistic philosophy with the Upaniṣadic absolutism implies a denial of the view that Spinozism can be correctly understood on the lines of

1 Wolfson, Vol. II, P. 340.

2 *Correspondence* L. P. 270.

Hegelianism.¹ It may be even said that Spinoza rejects the very fundamentals on which Hegelianism stands. Hegel accepts the logic of identity-in-difference and conceives reality on the pattern of thought ; for him the real is rational. For thought, the particular and the universal, the ego and the non-ego, subject and object, etc., are correlates ; one cannot be understood without the other and hence both must be admitted. But if both the opposites are real, how is the opposition removed ? Hegel suggests that in the Dialectical movement of thought, there is not only thesis and anti-thesis but also a third moment which is synthesis. This synthesis is of many grades and is most perfect and comprehensive in the Absolute in which all the differences are harmonised. Harmony here does not mean the annihilation of the differences but an adjustment or reconciliation of them ; nothing is rejected but at the same time nothing is accepted as it is with all its angularities. Two implications of conceiving reality as rational must also be noted. Firstly, no concept, according to Hegel, is absolute, self-sufficient or self-evident ; each is necessarily related to its opposite, and each gives meaning to the other. Secondly, there is nothing in reality which is opaque to thought ; the whole of reality must be transparent to thought, otherwise thought is destined to eternal failure.

Spinoza's principle that all determination is negation may be taken as a rejection of the logic of identity-in-difference. It is true that he does not attempt anywhere

¹ For a completely opposite view see. *'The Spinoza-Hegel Paradox'* by Henry Alonzo Myers who holds that the "two philosophers start with the same premises and come to diametrically opposed conclusions." Preface.

an explicit criticism of this logic, but that it is unsound can be made clear by an analysis of the implications of his conception of the absolute. There is also an implicit rejection of the two implications of the Hegelian view noted above. To say that "the concept of substance is self-conceived or that the knowledge of God does not depend on the knowledge of any other thing"¹ is tantamount to saying that God is self-evident. Substance therefore is unrelated and absolute ; it is beyond all relatedness or concepts. Finally, Spinoza accepts, besides Thought and Extension, an infinite number of unknown attributes of God or substance, and makes it clear, as already noted, that we cannot form a general idea of God. Substance is absolutely indeterminate and hence inaccessible to thought which can comprehend only the determinate. This is a denial of the omniscience of thought or its capacity to know everything. It is thus evident that a Hegelian approach to Spinozism as that of Caird is bound to be frustrated. Spinozism is an absolutism of the Vedāntic type, and if there are any obscure points in it, they must be explained on the Vedāntic lines.

II

The Form of Presentation

Essentially an absolutism, Spinozism is presented in the *Ethics* as a kind of dogmatism. At the very outset certain definitions appear to be uncritically accepted ; we are not told as to how to get those definitions, and why some other definition is not acceptable. A dichotomous division of reality or things into substance and mode is assumed without justification. It is as if the very

¹ *Ethics*, I Scholium to Prop. 8.

things to which we hope to be led rationally are taken or granted, and our initial doubts and difficulties are not even entertained. In contrast to this, Descartes appears to give us a chance to bring forward all our difficulties, removes them and then seems to lead us to his conclusions by the hand. While Descartes' conclusions seem to follow necessarily, Spinoza's definitions seem to demand blind acceptance. Similar criticisms are offered against the Vedāntic reliance on the Upaniṣads and its acceptance of the scriptural authority as infallible.

The Cartesian method appeals to us because we seem to take philosophy merely as a matter of intellectual curiosity, and not as a pursuit which begins with a spiritual discontent as well as certainty. As is evident from the very outset, Descartes' motive in writing the *Meditations* was hardly philosophical or spiritual ; his problem was not to find out a way of spiritual life but to refute¹ the sceptics and the atheists by constructing a philosophy which would be as little doubted as Mathematics and which would be readily accepted by everyone. Descartes begins his *Discourse on Method* by assuming that "Good sense is of all things among men the most equally distributed." The foundation of his philosophy is this good sense or common-sense and not any spiritual unrest or incling. To appear least uncritical he tried to see and to show the very limits of doubt by proposing universal doubt. He thus reached the indubitable *cogito ergo sum*. Being unaware of the deep-rooted malady he could hardly imagine that doubt was only warned and not finally vanquished. Subsequent thinkers detected that the *cogito ergo sum* was the very womb of doubt. Ambitious

1 cf. His Dedication. to *The Method*,

philosophers in their anxiety to bring things within everybody's reach start with commonsense to which least opposition is expected ; popular philosophies follow the path of least resistance. But as irony would have it, such philosophies satisfy neither the common man nor the spiritually awakened. Cartesianism is addressed to the common man and not to the spiritually awakened. For spiritual men religion is enough according to Descartes.

Neither Vedānta nor Spinozism seeks to win the approval of the common man ; philosophy is not to be administered to everyone like food and clothes ; nor is it its avowed aim to win over the sceptics and the atheists. Spinoza holds, in agreement with Vedāntism, that philosophy presupposes a peculiar kind of spiritual consciousness, and hence while philosophy is for the few, religion is for the common man,¹ and neither is meant for the sceptic or the atheist. Initial doubt can never be finally cured except by the rise of spiritual consciousness, and hence unlike Descartes, Spinoza never tried to cure it. In Vedāntic terms, philosophy requires an *adbhikāri* ; like Vedāntism, Spinozism also is addressed only to the initiated, and not to all and sundry. Hence instead of clearing initial difficulties, Spinoza goes straight to the central problem, namely, the conception of God. Like Śaṅkara,² Spinoza also would say that even though God is known to us, still it is necessary to know Him in a special way and to remove the confusions or the variety of views that have gathered round the conception.

1 *Theologico*, P. 269 "all without exception may obey, but there are very few indeed who, under the guidance of reason, could attain to habits of virtue...."

2 *Brahma Sūtra*. Śāṅkara Bhāṣya, I, 1. i.

Philosophy does not impart but only improves our knowledge of God. In the *Short Treatise*, Spinoza argues that God is not known through concepts or symbols. "As for instance, if God should have said to the Israelites, 'I am Jehovah, your God,' they must have known beforehand without the words that there was a God before they could be assured that this was he."¹ Howsoever vaguely and confusedly, God is known only directly.

It is clear then that philosophy must start with an intuition of God. Spinoza's definitions therefore must not be taken as dogmatic assumptions but as the formulations of his intuitions, or at the worst, as an invitation to put ourselves in his position and then see whether we attain the spiritual goal or not ; for, after all, the tree is to be judged by the fruit. Similarly, the Vedāntic acceptance of the Upaniṣadic authority is an indication of the ultimate reliance of all philosophy on direct intuition ; If an initial intuition is not accepted, philosophy would be like talking in the air.

Spinoza is also justified in beginning his *Ethics* with an analysis of the concept of God rather than of experience. The essence of philosophical discipline is to enable us to cultivate a spiritual perspective, and only that perspective is spiritual which makes us see things from the standpoint of God ; it is then alone that we can see our true position in the universe and the true order of things. In the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, Śaunaka asks the question "What is that, revered sir, by knowing which all this becomes known" ?² Knowledge of the

¹ *Short Treatise*, P. 142.

² *Muṇḍ Up.* 1, 3. *kasminnu bhagavo vijñāte sarvam idam vijñātam bhavati iti.*

ultimate alone renders the knowledge of other things possible. Spinoza observes that people land themselves in all sorts of difficulties because they try to reach the concept of God after fixing up their notion of other things first. "The nature of God which should be reflected on first.....they have taken to be the last in the order of knowledge, and have put into the first place what they call the objects of sensation ; hence, while they are considering natural phenomena, they give no attention at all to the divine nature, and, when afterward they apply their mind to the study of the divine nature, they are quite unable to bear in mind the first hypotheses with which they have overlaid the knowledge of natural phenomena, inasmuch as such hypotheses are no help toward understanding the Divine nature."¹ To be obsessed with empirical objects is to bid good-bye to philosophy ; the *reductio ad absurdum* of such obsession is manifest today in the philosophies of Alexander and Whitehead in which God figures last in the course of evolution. In the absence of right orientation we get only guesswork and speculation. The philosophy of Spinoza is well orientated.

Similarly it is wrong to criticise Spinoza for starting with a dichotomous division of being into Substance and Mode, i.e., into that which is self-conceived as well as self-existent, and that which exists through something else. In a sense the consciousness of an Independent Being is the very alpha and omega of spiritual consciousness. Finite objects do not declare their finitude of their own accord. Finitude is not self-evident ; it is intelligible, because there is in us, howsoever faint, an intuition

¹ *Ethics*, II Scholium to Prop. 10.

of the infinite, and it is in contrast with this intuition that the finite appears as finite. If the finite was self-conceived, it might as well be absolutely independent or self-dependent. Those who imagine that the infinite is reached by taking off the limits of the finite forget that they are thereby making the finite absolutely independent,¹ and the infinite dependent on it. When spiritual consciousness deepens and takes the form of philosophic reflection, this implicit idea of the infinite becomes explicit. *Nityānitya-viveka* is one of the necessary qualifications of an *adbikāri*. Logically also, if *regress ad infinitum* is to be avoided, one must accept something as self-conceived and self-existent. Hence Spinoza's initial distinction of Substance and mode is justified.

III

The Definition of Substance

The problem which exercised Spinoza's mind most was the problem of purifying the concept of God. His study of the great masters of religious thought had impressed upon him that on account of the ingress of sentimentalism, many inconsistencies had crept into the concept of God, with the result that all other problems of philosophy also were wrongly approached. A critical examination of the current ideas of God had become necessary. But lest his criticism should awaken suspicion in the minds of religious men, it was necessary that he should point out that to a great extent he was in agreement with them, and the changes that he introduced

¹ Russell's *Philosophy of Leibniz* P. 145. In Spinoza the finite is relative whereas in Leibniz "*materia prima* is nothing relative, but part of the nature of each monad."

were only for the sake of consistency. This reform, he emphasised, did not touch the sanctity of the scriptures; for scriptures do not teach us philosophy but only obedience. Thus the distinction he drew between philosophy and religion secured for him the freedom to follow reason where it led, regardless of religious sentimentalism. And since his object was only reformation and not innovation, he accepted without apologies whatever he could from the traditional views. prof. Wolfson rightly represents¹ him as saying "I accept your definitions of terms but I use them with greater consistency than you." It is difficult to say that he accepts all the definitions of terms, but surely he did accept many, one of which was the definition of substance. It is needless to demand from him a justification for his starting with an apparently gratuitous definition of God or substance.

Out of the many definitions of God, Spinoza selects one which seems to satisfy all the conditions of the definition of an uncreated thing. A definition in general "must explain the inmost essence of a thing, and must take care not to substitute for this any of its properties,"² The essence of a thing is that from which all its properties can be deduced. The three special characteristics³ of a thing uncreated are (i) that the thing must not need explanation by anything outside itself i.e., should exclude the idea of a cause, (ii) that the definition should leave "no room for doubt as to whether the thing exists or not", (iii) that the definition must not contain abstractions. Keeping all these in view the only correct defini-

¹ Wolfson, Vol. I, P. 21.

² *Emendationes*, P. 32.

³ Ibid, P. 33. Also *Correspondence*, XXXIV, PP. 218-219.

tion of substance is "that which is in itself and is conceived through itself."

Two objections against Spinoza's procedure may be anticipated. It may be said that Spinoza's definition is not correct. But the correctness of it may be demonstrated by showing that it contains, all that is implicit in the notion of God as absolute being. Again it may be pointed out that Spinoza is inconsistent¹ in his use of the definition. Such inconsistencies, if any, will be dealt with in the sequel ; but there is almost a unanimity that Spinoza is generally consistent.

The expression 'self-conceived' in the definition of substance appears to be something of a paradox. A concept is always relative ; it illumines other concepts and is illumined by them ; every concept is almost potential judgment. But to say that a concept is self-conceived is like saying that a concept is self-sufficient, is not relative, i.e., is not a concept at all. On the strength of this argument, Latta points out that it is wrong to hold that the concept of substance is self-conceived because it is intelligible only in relation to the concept of mode. "A Being whose essence involves existence is intelligible only in relation to a being whose essence does not involve existence ; that which is *in se* can be thought only in relation to that which is *in alio*."² It may be conceded that thought is essentially relational ; in the realm of thought one concept is not intelligible without its correlate. But on this ground it cannot be said that all knowledge is relational ; thought may be

1 cf. Flint, *Anti-Theistic Theories* : 6th Edn. Pp. 361-362.

2 Latta, *Mind* VIII, N.S. P. 337.

relational but everything need not be thought. As a matter of fact, the mutual dependence of concepts in thought indicates a defect of thought rather than its strength. Of two correlated concepts each derives its content either wholly or partly from the other ; if the former, then both the concepts are empty, and if we pursue it further, all concepts may be said to be empty. If the latter, then how is that content which is not derived, i.e., which is not relational, known ? Evidently it must be known in some non-relational way. Hence thought cannot be omniscient ; a non-relational way of knowing must be admitted. That substance is self-conceived only means that it is beyond concepts or is known non-conceptually.

When Spinoza speaks of substance as self-conceived and says that the knowledge of substance does not depend on any other knowledge, he is only making a demand that a kind of knowledge other than that of modes must be admitted. Modes are not wholly positive ; there is much of negative element in them. A thing has to be understood as what it is and what it is not. Again, modes are dependent, and hence they have to be known in terms of their causes. On the other hand substance is absolutely unrelated ; it is the very *prins* of all knowledge ; it is too simple and too transparent to be conceived literally ; in fact it is even inconceivable, in that it is only intuited. As already shown, Spinoza says in so many many words that we cannot form a general idea of God. "To Spinoza.....God is an object of direct knowledge."¹ Dr. Flint does not seem to know the limits of thought when he says that the opinion that "man has an intuition

¹ Wolfson Vol. I. P. 165.

or immediate perception of God is untenable ; that he has an immediate feeling of God is absurd."¹ It might, with greater justification, be said that God alone and nothing else is immediately and unconditionally known ; the knowledge of everything else is only conditional. God is at once knowable and unknowable both.

There is a certain paradox regarding our knowledge of God or the Absolute. The Upaniṣads have brought it out well. The unknowability of the Absolute is stressed in such utterances as '*how is the knower to the known*'², '*He knows the knowable but there is no knower of Him*'³ and many other⁴. These statements are meant only to hammer the point that Brahman, being beyond all categories, cannot be known in the ordinary conceptual way. But at the same time it must not be imagined that Brahman is beyond all knowledge, because the Scripture again points out : *That this self is Brahma or that this Puruṣa is self-luminous etc.*⁵ How can that which is our very self or rather the self of everything remain unknown ? How can that which illumines everything itself be unknown ? The self-illuminated needs no light. The knower of everything or the subject may not be and cannot be known as an object, but that does not argue its absolute unknowability unless we believe that all knowledge must be objective. There is such a thing as direct

1 *Theism* P. 83.

2 vijñātāram are kena vijānīyāt. *Bṛ. Up.* IV (5) 15.

3 Sa vetti vedyam naca tasyāsti vettā. *Sve. Up.* III, 19.

4 avijñātām vijñātām vijañātām avijñātām *Kena. Up.* II, 3.

Yato vāco nivartante, *Tait. Up.* II, 9.

adṛṣṭam avyavahāryam. *Māṇḍūkya Up.* 7.

5 cf. *Bṛ. Up.* II (5) 19, IV (3) 9, Also *Kaṭha Up.* II (2) 15

intuition or *sākṣātkāra* which is extra-objective or non-conceptual. The straight forward identification of Ātman and Brahman removes the impasse of agnosticism in the Upaniṣads. Unfortunately, Spinoza stopped with the declaration that substance is self-conceived, and did not clearly point out further that it is also identical with our very self. Had he done so, the questions of the existence and knowability of substance would not arise. Under the circumstances therefore the identity of substance and self has only to be inferred on the basis of the doctrines of the immanence of substance and the eternity of mind taken along with the unreality of the empirical world. Only the self can be self-evident, and so if substance were an other to the self, it would be utterly dark rather than be self-conceived or self-evident.

That substance is self-conceived implies that it is *utterly unrelated*, i.e., absolutely indeterminate. It does not sustain any temporal, spatial or causal relation; it must be self-dependent, i.e. self-existent. Thus it appears that the addition of the expression 'self-existent' is almost superfluous. But there might be a reason for it. Prof. Wolfson says¹ that the medieval definition is simply that substance is that which is in itself, and Spinoza added to it 'that which is conceived through itself.' It may be remarked that Spinoza does not simply add, but definitely emphasises that the more important element of the definition is the part that he adds; because *from the self-evidence of substance everything else can be derived*.² And though self-evidence is enough to define substance fully yet he retains the medieval definition to indicate his

1 cf Yat sākṣād aparokṣād Brahman, *Bṛ. Up.* III, (4) 1.

2 Wolfson Vol. I, P. 64.

fundamental agreement. Another reason why he retained the expression 'self-existent' may be that according to him the definition must indicate whether a thing exists or not ; no doubt should be left regarding its existence. So the self-conceived or the absolutely indeterminate is not pure nothing but necessary existence or the self-existent.

IV

Proofs of God's Existence

If substance is self-evident, it would apparently be superfluous to advance arguments to prove its existence. How do the proofs help us ? No doubt, in his proofs, Spinoza "does not pretend to arrive at a newly discovered fact, but rather to restate a fact already known."¹ Nevertheless, it is to some purpose that the proofs are given.

Generally speaking, there are three types of men. There are those high class of souls who have a direct experience of God ; it is experience rather than reason that sustains their consciousness of God. But such men of direct knowledge are very few, because for such knowledge "it is first of all necessary to adopt a definite mode and plan of life, and to set before one a definite end."² Such people are in no need of philosophy, i.e. of reasoning about God. There is also another class of people who are more or less on the animal plane, for whom philosophy is useless ; because such people have no inkling whatsoever of God, and philosophy, as already

¹ Wolfson, Vol. I. P. 175.

² *Correspondence*, XXXVIII, P. 228.

noted, does not produce the desire to know God but presupposes it. But there is a third class of men who may be called the border-line men who have an undefined and vague consciousness of something beyond, but who are not quite clear about it and require just a little lift to cross the zone of vagueness. Such men are *jijñāsus*, seekers after the truth, and it is for them that philosophy is meant. To such people these proofs give direction and clarity and above all, some inner confidence that enables them to keep their heads above water when they are assailed by the mighty waves of doubt. It enables them to keep the light burning when the mind is stormy.

It would be a gross misunderstanding of the self-evidence of God to imagine that God is equally known to all, because self-evidence does not mean that God goes about declaring his existence ; it only means that in the absence of all obstructions, no other light is needed to reveal God. Hence even though God is self-evident, there are obstructions in our way that prevent us from realising him. These obstructions are more or less according to the spiritual status of each of us. There is a stage in the growth of spiritual consciousness where reason helps us a good deal to remove the veil that hides God from us ; this stage is where we are able to catch just a glimpse of Him. The intuition of God is not like the perception of a chair or a table which once seen does not require any more attention. Once one has had a glimpse of Him one constantly likes to think of Him and to be united with Him. The deeper our awareness the greater our joy. A contemplation of the proofs deepens our consciousness of God, in that it removes the veil more and more. Does not Spinoza tell us that

the desire to know God intuitively may arise from the second class of knowledge ?¹

It is evident then that it would be an error to think that the proofs taken by themselves are enough to produce in us a knowledge of God; the proofs are efficacious only when the individual is a real *jijñāsu* i.e. when he has already some vision of God. It is wrong to demand whether proofs produce conviction²; because mere arguments cannot produce conviction unless there is some intuition already there. Even in mathematics proofs or demonstrations succeed because they refer to some experience or intuition. Proofs apart, even miracles cannot convince a doubting mind; there must be in us a feeling of mystery or an incipient intuition in the form of faith. No amount of reasoning can create conviction unless it appeals to some experience. Reason helps us only when God-consciousness has welled up in the mind.

It is unnecessary to go into the details of Spinoza's proofs for the existence of God; for there is hardly anything new except their form.³ What is remarkable is that all the proofs are only different forms of the ontological argument. The essence of the ontological argument is its reference to the idea of God in us; it is immaterial whether this idea is of 'necessary existence' or of 'infinite power' or of perfection. The first proof is from the idea

1 cf. *Ethics*, V, Prop. 28.

2 cf. Froude: *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, Vol. I, New Ed. "the power of demonstration, like all other powers, can be judged only by its effects...does it produce conviction" ? P. 351.

3 For a thorough examination of proofs see Wolfson Vol. I, ch. VI.

of necessary existence¹, and the second is from God's perfection which is such that "neither in the nature of God nor externally to his nature, can a cause or reason be assigned which would annul his existence".² The third proof states that since existence is power and since finite things exist, it is necessary that "a being absolutely infinite necessarily exists also."³ Otherwise either finite things will exist necessarily or nothing will exist. The same proof is put in an *a priori* form in the fourth proof like this : "as the potentiality of existence is a power, it follows that, in proportion as reality increases in the nature of a thing, so also will it increase its strength for existence."⁴ The first, second and fourth proofs are admittedly *a priori* ; but even the third proof which is said to be *a posteriori* is only a substitution for the fourth. Hence in a sense the ontological argument may be said to be the only proof offered for the existence of God.

The ontological argument, if rightly understood, will not appear puerile and primitive, a mere derivation of existence from an idea. After all what is the reason that it has appealed to people in spite of repeated criticisms ? The reason is that it is impossible to dismiss, though difficult to recognise, the intuition of a self-evident Being from our minds. The ontological argument is almost an appeal to recognise in experience a self-evident principle, it is a demand to recognise the uniqueness of the knowledge of God. The criticism that Spinoza simply defines God into existence⁵ or that

1 *Ethics* I. Prop 11.

2 *Ibid.*, Second Proof.

3 *Ibid.*, Third Proof.

4 *Ibid.*, Scholium.

5 Martineau *Types* Vol I, P. 295.

he "assumes the fact that substance does exist in order to prove that it must" only betrays a failure to appreciate the uniqueness of the idea of God. The knowledge of God, and the knowledge of Him as necessary existence or infinite and eternal are not different acts or steps of knowledge but one and the same. Either God is at once known as all this or is not known at all.

V

The Properties of Substance

Since Spinoza claims that all the properties of a thing can be derived from its definition, it should be possible to derive the properties (not attributes) of substance from its definition, its self-evidence or self-existence. But it must be noted at the outset that he makes a distinction between properties and Attributes of God. The properties are those qualities of God that are logically derived from His definition, qualities without which God would not be God. This seems to be the sense in which he uses the term on various occasions.¹ "From the mere fact," he says, "that I define God as a Being to whose essence belongs existence I infer several of His properties, namely that He exists necessarily, that He is unique, immutable, infinite, etc."² These properties while they do not indicate any complexity in God, are not mere tautologies either. They may best be understood as what the Vedānta calls the *svarūpalakṣaṇa* of Brahman. When Brahman is spoken of as *Sat* (existence) *cit* (consciousness) and *Ānanda* (Bliss), it is meant that

¹ *Ethics*, Appendix to part I, *Correspondence* XXXV and LXXXIII, *Emendations*, P. 32.

² *Correspondence* LXXXIII P. 365.

what is *sat* is also *cit*, etc. rather, each is the predicate of each,¹ and also none is a predicate at all. In fact, the Vedānta interprets² all judgments as a statement of identity and not of identity-in-difference, with the result that the subject and the predicate are understood as identical, and difference as illusory. All judgments are reducible to the form: "I am Brahman" "All is Brahman".

The term 'Attribute' is used by Spinoza in a specific sense. In contradistinction to properties, attributes are not derived from God's definition; they are what the intellect perceives of substance as constituting its essence. The intellect "attributes such and such a nature to substance."³ The attributes therefore are not in the being of substance; they are super-imposed,⁴ and hence they may be best understood as *Upādhis* of substance. *Upādhis* do not constitute the inner being of Brahman; they indicate the determination of Brāhman in a particular way; they may at best indicate the existence of Brahman, but do not enter into the constitution of Brahman. In this sense the attributes may be compared to the *tatastha-lakṣaṇa* of Brahman. In any case, the attributes must be distinguished from the *svarūpalakṣaṇas* or the properties of substance.

At different places Spinoza gives us slightly different enumeration of the properties of substance. In his letter⁵ to Joh Hudde he says that the properties of a

1 *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* Ch. VIII, svasyaiva svāpekṣaya dharma-dharmi bhāvakalpanayā lakṣyalakṣaṇatva-sambhavāt.

2 cf. Prof. T. R. V. Murti, 'Theory of Judgment in Indian systems' *Philosophical Quarterly*, January 1933.

3 *Correspondence* IX, P. 108.

4 The question of Attributes is further considered in the next chapter.

5 *Correspondence* XXXV, P. 220.

Being that exists necessarily are that it must be eternal, must be simple, infinite, indivisible, perfect, self-existent and one. In the Appendix to Part I of the *Ethics*, he summarises the properties of God and says, "I have shown that He necessarily exists, that he is one ; that he is and acts solely by the necessity of his own nature ; that he is the free cause of all things and how he is so ; that all things are in God and so depend on him; that without Him they could neither exist nor be conceived ; that all things are predetermined by God, not through his free will, but from the very nature of God or infinite power."

Before discussing the nature of each property separately, it may be shown in brief how Spinoza deduces them from the definition of substance ; because the objection that only one property can be derived from a definition is even now raised in spite of the fact that Spinoza has himself answered it in his letter to Tschirnhaus.¹ He points out there that the remark "may be true in the case of the most simple things, or in the case of things of reason (under which I also include figures) but not in the case of real things." Substance is neither simple like an atom, nor is it merely a thing of reason or concept ; it is something real.

VI

The Deduction of God's Properties

As self-evident Being, substance is, by its very nature, prior to modes both epistemically and ontologically. Modes are known or conceived through other modes and ultimately through God or substance which is self-conceived. Similarly modes are not self-existent but dependent on God who alone is self-existent. Thus

¹ *Correspondence* LXXXIII, P. 365.

² *Ethics* I, Prop. 1.

God is the prius of all knowledge and all being. Again as self-conceived i.e. absolutely unrelated, substance must be one¹ and universal. If several substances are granted then they must be distinguished² either by the difference of their properties or by means of their modes. They cannot be distinguished by reference to their properties, because in order to be substances they must have same and similar properties. If it is said that like two new shillings,³ there may be two substances in spite of their sameness, Spinoza would say that since there is spatial and numerical relation between the two, their analogy with substance cannot be sustained; shillings are not self-conceived or substances; a substance must be self-conceived. Similarly, substances cannot be distinguished in reference to their modes because substance is prior to its modes. Being self-conceived one substance cannot be understood as an effect of another, that is, one substance cannot be produced by another.⁴

The unity of substance may be proved dialectically. If there were many substances, they must be either *absolutely* alike, or *absolutely* different or partly alike and partly different. If they are *absolutely* alike, they cannot be distinguished one from the other; because distinction implies that they are not *absolutely* alike. If the substances are *absolutely* different, then in what sense are they all substances? To be designated by the same name substance, they must have at least some common features, and if they do have, then they are not *absolutely*

1 *Ethics*, I, Prop. 5

2 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 4

3 Martineau *Study*, cf., footnote, Pp. 174-175.

4 *Ethics*, I, Prop. 6 Also cf. *Correspondence*, IV P. 83 where Spinoza points out that one man does not create but only begets an other.

different. If, however, the substances are said to be partly alike and partly different, then both the above criticisms apply. To the extent they are different, they cannot all be substances and to the extent they are alike they cannot be different or many. Hence the unity of substance must be admitted. Leibniz and Descartes are both inconsistent. Descartes is wrong in supposing that a substance can be created. Leibniz seems to suffer from confusion, because on the one hand he tells us that there are infinite number of unique substances called monads and on the other, he admits some thing as common to all ; force or activity is common to all the monads. He fails to see that the logic of pure difference is self-contradictory ; absolute difference is inconceivable.

Since all determination is negation,¹ substance cannot be finite or determinate. It must be absolutely infinite and indeterminate,² capable of being infinitely determined, i.e., it has infinite attributes.³ Since there is really nothing else beside substance, all determinations will be subjective and false. Again, since substance is absolutely infinite, nothing can be outside it.⁴ Substance is the sole and universal reality.⁵ The appearance of plurality does not mean that substance is divided⁶, for if the parts retain the nature of substance, then there will be many substances, and if they do not, substance would cease to be.⁷ Substance transcends appearance. And

1 *Correspondence* I, P. 270.

2 *Ethics* I, Prop. 8

3 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 9

4 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 15

5 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 14

6 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 13

7 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 12 Proof.

even though substance is indivisible, infinite things in infinite modes follow¹ from it, because God being the sole reality, He is the sole cause also, i.e., the cause of everything. Substance is immanent. Being the sole cause, God is also the free cause.² He acts merely according to His own laws, and is compelled by nothing. God alone is free³ and nothing else is. He is free not in the sense of exercising volition,⁴ but in the sense of being the absolute or the sole cause. God is the immanent and not the transeunt cause of things, because there is nothing outside Him. He is not only the efficient, effecting cause of the existence of things, but also of their essence.⁵ He is both the material (*upādāna*) and the efficient (*nimitta*) cause.⁶ All that is possible is actual,⁷ because there is nothing to prevent God from, creating. Nothing is contingent⁸; "things could not have been produced in any other manner or order than that in which they were produced ;" for that would argue that God is changeable.⁹ God does not create with any motive, because that would imply imperfection.¹⁰

From the above summary it may be easily seen that Spinoza's description of the properties of substance generally agrees with the traditional conception of God.

1 *Ethics*. I, Prop. 16

2 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 17

3 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 17 corollary 2.

4 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 17 Scholium.

5 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 18

6 cf. *abhinna-nimittopādāna-kārṇa* of the Vedānta.

7 *Ethics* I, Prop. 25

8 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 29

9 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 33

10 *Ibid.* Appendix to Part I

This is why he does not hesitate to call his substance God. The only change he introduces is regarding the causality of God. The traditional conception of creation is 'demiurgic,' teleological and volitional. These conceptions appeal more to our religious sentiment than to reason. Spinoza was of the opinion, as already noted, that in the philosophic pursuit of truth religious sentiment should be kept at a distance. If the problem of creation presents difficulties, we should change our conception of causality rather than interfere with the conception of God which is the pivot of all philosophy. If 'demiurgic' creation is inconsistent with God's absoluteness and if creation out of nothing is inadmissible, we shall change our conception of causation and allow the consequences thereof. Thus the central problem of Spinozism is in a way the problem of creation, and not that of 'matter' and 'form' as Prof. Wolfson suggests,¹ because the latter problem itself is a product of the former. In order to explain Spinoza's conception of creation, some properties of God should be examined further

VII

Substance is Transcendent

The self-evidence of substance necessarily implies its unrelatedness, its absolute independence and indeterminateness. Thus understood substance must be something transcendent ; it is beyond all relations and categories. The transcendence of substance is not of the kind of transcendence that one finite object enjoys in respect of another. In a sense a chair transcends a table, i.e., a chair is merely beyond or different from the table.

¹ Wolfson, Vol. I, P. 256.

It is not in this sense that substance is simply beyond or different from the universe of finite things ; because substance is the substance *of* things ; it is the very ground of the universe; every thing that is, is in the substance, and yet substance as unrelated is beyond every thing. Substance is thus both transcendent and immanent. It is for this reason that Spinoza uses the terms Substance, God, Nature, and Universe indifferently. When this is not understood it is said that such "perversion of religious terms is misleading and repulsive."¹ The transcendence of God does not mean that He is external to the world or separate from it ; He is all-pervasive. God transcends the world in the same sense in which space transcends the objects in it, and also pervades the universe in the same sense in which space pervades the objects. The notions of immanence and transcendence are not exclusive of each other ; as indeterminate and unrelated substance is transcendent; but as the ground of everything, it is immanent.²

In the Upaniṣads too there are statements that seem to be apparently inconsistent. Thus on the one hand we have 'not this, not this' (*neti, neti*),³ 'there is no plurality' (*neha nānāsti kiñcana*),⁴ etc. On the other hand, we have 'All this is Brahma' (*sarvam khalvidam Brahma*),⁵

1 cf. Martineau : *Study* P. 171, where he quotes Ueberweg and remarks that "till it is found out, it is misleading ; and when it is found out, it is repulsive."

2 *Gītā* XIII 17, *avibhaktam ca bhuteṣu vibhaktam iva ca sthitam*.

3 *Bṛ. Up.* IV, 4, 22.

4 *Kaṭha Up.* II, i (11), *Br. Up.* 4, (19).

5 *Cbāndogya Up.* III, 14, (1). Also *ātmaivedam sarvam* VII, 25, ii.

'That self which underlies all (*ya ātmā sarvāntarāḥ*)¹ etc. Similarly, in the *Gītā* the Lord says on the one hand 'who perceives me everywhere, and everything in me' (*yo mām paśyati sarvatra, sarvam ca mayi paśyati*)² 'like pearls in a thread' (*sūtre mañigāṇā iva*)³ etc. and on the other hand He says, 'I am not in them, but they are in me' (*na tvāham teṣu, te mayi*)⁴ These seemingly conflicting utterances can be harmonised only if they are taken to indicate at once the immanence as well as the transcendence of the Absolute. In the case of Spinoza, as much as in the case of the Upaniṣads, the world-affirming expressions have been sometimes taken literally with the result that the transcendent aspect of the Absolute is not emphasised, and we get only some type of monism or pantheism.

When the transcendence of the Spinozistic substance is not duly recognised, God cannot but appear to be either a mere titular head or another name for the universe or simply a totality of the Attributes. These are the three typical interpretations⁵ of Spinoza's substance given by the European exponents. So far as we are able to see, these interpretations are due not to the fact that the logic of Spinoza is defective or his utterances inconsistent, but to the fact that the Western mind in general is not able to admit the conception of Pure Being except with a grain of salt. The logic of pure identity has not yet been

1 *Bṛ. Up.* IV, 4, (i). Also *Idam sarvam yad ayamātmā* III iv (6).

2 *Gītā* VI, 30.

3 *Gītā* VII, 8.

4 *Gītā* VII, 12.

5 These views are considered later.

assimilated, and the consequence is that we get in the history of European thought either some type of realism or some variety of Hegelianism, the former accepting the logic of difference and the latter that of identity-in-difference. It is necessary therefore to bring out that the concept of Pure Being alone is consistent.

VIII

Substance is Pure Being

Substance is free from every kind of difference. Being absolutely infinite, substance is the highest universal, underlying everything. But it is not a universal in the sense that any distinction of genus and species can be made in respect of it, as it is possible to do in the case of conceptual universals. Substance is a unique universal, and in fact it is not a concept at all ; God is neither a species nor a genus, though for the sake of understanding he may be compared to the *summum genus* or the highest universal ; we can form no general idea of Him. *Substance is advitiya* (non-dual).

Substance being the only reality there is no external duality of substance and something else beside it ; nor is there any internal difference in substance. The possibility of duality or plurality of substance is ruled out, because if there were more than one substance, each would be finite and limited, and each would fail to be self-conceived infinite substance. Mind and Matter threaten to claim the position of substance as they appear to be infinite; but even they cannot be regarded as substances because they are only *relatively* infinite, and not *absolutely* infinite. Neither the attributes nor the properties of substance introduce any element of difference in it.

There are neither *accidental* nor *essential* differences in the constitution of substance. Although God is said to possess intellect and will, it implies no internal difference in Him. In the scholium 2 to Proposition 8 Part I of the *Ethics*, Spinoza tells us that "those who confuse the two natures, divine and human, readily attribute human passions to the Deity ;" because they "make no distinction between the modifications of substance and the substances themselves." Again in the scholium to Prop. 17, he says that the terms intellect and will, if they are to be attributed to God must be understood in a sense utterly different from the ordinary ; "For intellect and will, which should constitute the essence of God, would perforce be as far apart as the poles from the human intellect and will, in fact, would have nothing in common with them but the name ; there would be about as much correspondence between the two as there is between the Dog, the heavenly constellation, and a dog, an animal that barks." Proposition 32 tells us that will is only a necessary cause and not a free one ; God who is free does not act volitionally. Again, Proposition 34 says that the power of God is the same as his essence. From all this it appears that Spinoza, while he agrees with the medievals that God's intellect, power and will are one and the same, wants to maintain that if these attributes are not to introduce any internal difference in God, their meaning must change considerably ; and consequent upon this change, the meaning of divine causality will also change.

Although substance is absolutely pure and simple being, yet it can have attributes in the specific sense in which Spinoza defines them ; in fact, substance has infinite attributes, because it is *absolutely* infinite and

indeterminate. The attributes cannot interfere with the simplicity of substance because they are merely¹ what the mind perceives as "constituting the essence of God." The attributes are not substances ; since they are infinite, not absolutely but only of their kind, i.e., they are relatively infinite. The relative infinity of attributes itself requires the existence of the Absolute or Substance. Not being identical with the attributes, substance may have infinite attributes and yet remain simple. If the indeterminateness and transcendence of substance are kept in view, it will be obvious that its simplicity is unaffected by infinite attributes.

Nor is there any duality of essence and existence in Substance ; the essence of substance involves existence,² Substance exists necessarily.³ In the case of finite things existence does not pertain to their nature, and so they come into being and go out of being. But substance is eternal ; there is no before and after in it. Spinoza criticises⁴ the Peripatetics who misunderstood the Ancients in thinking that they tried to reach the necessary existence of God by climbing up the chain of causes, i.e., by showing the impossibility of a *regress ad infinitum*. This kind of proof only shows that they failed to understand the true nature of God that is unique and to which existence necessarily pertains. To be aware of God is to be aware of a peculiar existence, and hence the force of the argument does not lie in the idea that "a regression to infinity is impossible but only in the impossibility

1 That only the subjective interpretation of Attributes is consistent will be shown in the next chapter.

2 *Ethics* I, Prop. 7.

3 *Ibid.*, I, Prop. 11.

4 *Correspondence* XII, Pp. 121-122.

of supposing that things, which do not exist necessarily in virtue of their own nature, are not determined to existence by something which does exist necessarily in virtue of its own nature, and which is a cause, not an effect."¹ Substance is pure existence ; there is no duality of essence and existence in it.

Lest Pure Being or Substance should be taken merely as an abstraction or pure nothing, Spinoza gives to it a positive meaning and calls it *causa sui*.² This expression is generally misunderstood by his critics as well as admirers. Martineau goes to the extent of suggesting that "Substance itself he (Spinoza) obliges to stand beside them (modes) there. It also, he tells us, is an effect ; only not like them, from anything else, but from itself.....it is rendered possible only by the assumption that causality is a universal category."³ This is indeed a caricature ; but even those who are sympathetic point out that the concept of cause ought not to have been introduced in the idea of God. What is not understood is that *causa sui* does not imply the universality of the principle of causality but a denial of that universality ; God is pointed out to be beyond cause and effect. Ueberweg thinks that the expression "implies, according to Spinoza's intention, the dependence of existence on essence ; but the latter of these cannot cause the former, unless it already exists itself."⁴ This criticism would hold only

1 *Correspondence* XII, 122.

2 Wolfson Vol. I, P. 129. "The term *causa sui* is not a mere negation, meaning causelessness ; it means also something positive ; it is an assertion of self-sufficiency and hence of actual existence."

3 *Study*, P. 117.

4 *History of Philosophy*, P. 64.

if Spinoza had meant the dependence of existence on essence ; but he did not mean it. By *causa sui* he simply meant the independence or self-dependence of existence¹; existence cannot be brought into *existence*.² Spinoza stoutly opposes the Christian dogma of absolute creation. Martineau points out that in his *Short Treatise* (II, xvii) Spinoza repudiated the term *causa sui* as sheer nonsense and yet applied it to God more than once.³ It is surprising how it escapes the acute intelligence of Martineau that what Spinoza repudiates there is the use of the expression in the case of modes and not the expression itself ; because there he is discussing the nature of 'desire' which is a modal property.

It is not merely causelessness that is implied by *causa sui*, and so the suggestion that the expression is inexact is beyond the mark. *Causa sui* does not mean only causeless but also self-dependent or free. A thing may be in a sense causeless, and not necessarily self-dependent. For instance, illusion cannot have by its very nature a real cause; because if it did have, it would itself become real and could not be cancelled ; but the fact is that it is cancelled and removed for good. So although illusion is causeless, it is not self-caused; because in that case it would maintain its existence and would even offer resistance ; but it does not. Hence it may be said that even though illusion is causeless, it is not *causa sui*. This is why the Vedānta holds that *māyā* is *anādi* or

1 *Emendations*, P. 31. "If the thing be self-existent, or as is commonly said, the cause of itself, it must be understood through its essence only."

2 *Cogitata Metaphysica*, Ili "We cannot affirm the existence of God, for the existence of God is God himself."

3 Martineau *Study*, P. 118.

beginningless, but not endless ; it is possible to get rid of it, i.e., it has an end. That which is *causa sui* has no end ; it is eternal and independent.

IX

The Vedāntic Conception of Brahman

Though Spinoza is fundamentally right in his conception of Substance as Pure Being, his position remains weak. And this for two reason. Firstly, he makes only positive assertions about Substance, and does not complete the view by the negative work of showing the inherent unintelligibility of the concept of difference. Secondly, he is not able to point to any actual experience of Pure Being ; in other words, he does not frankly identify substance and the self. Owing to this, his philosophy appears to be merely a speculative work. These two points have been fully brought out and emphasised in the Vedānta which shows by a dialectical analysis that the logic of pure identity alone is consistent, and also points out an actual state in which identity is actually experienced and does not remain merely an abstraction of the mind.

The Vedāntic Brahman may be best characterised as Self-evident Being,¹ Universal Being² and Pure Being³. The first phrase indicates the epistemological independence of Brahman, the second emphasises its non-duality, and the third implies its relation to the world of difference or phenomena, i.e., its unrelatedness. All these charac-

1 For the exposition of the concept of Brahman on these lines I am indebted to Prof. T. R. V. Murti's lectures.

2 *svayam-prakāśa* or *svataḥ siddha* or *svayamjyotiḥ*.

3 *mahā sāmānya*.

4 *nirguṇa*, *abheda*, *nirdharmaka*.

teristics may be derived from the definition of reality as *trikālābādhita sat* or as what is never cancelled i.e., what is, in the words of Spinoza, necessarily existent or eternal or self-existent. The difference between the Vedāntic definition and Spinoza's is that the former is not an *a priori* definition as the latter appears to be, but is the very implication of our judgment of reality and falsity, and is therefore based on experience. It is common experience that what is cancelled is taken as false. The waking consciousness cancels the dream-world as false even as the knowledge of the rope cancels the appearance of the 'snake.' What is cancelled is thus unreal and so the real must be beyond cancellation; that is, the real is what is not cancelled. The merit of this definition is that it does not impose upon us any arbitrary idea of the real before it is known; it rather analyses and lays bare what is implicit in common experience and presses us to seek what is not cancelled. The definition is necessarily negative; since the Absolute cannot be comprehended through our empirical categories, we can characterise it only negatively. Hence the superiority of the Vedāntic definition.

At first sight it may appear that the empirical world is never cancelled and hence it must be real; but it is not so. *Trikālābādhita* means that the real is by its very nature such that it cannot be cancelled or be conceived as cancelled in any time past, present and future; it has no reference to time, whatsoever. The empirical truths are found to be nowhere in dream¹; they are not only dis-

¹ *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā*, II, 7, *saprayojanatā teṣām svapne vipratipadyate*. Also Śaṅkara's comment, *jāgarite hi bhuktvā pītvā ca tṛpto...kṣutpipāsādyārtam ahorātroṣitam abhuktavantam ātmānam manyate, yathā svapne bhuktvā pītvā ca tṛptotthitas tathā*.

placed but even cancelled ; even after eating to one's satisfaction one dreams that one is hungry. What is more, in deep sleep, the empirical world disappears altogether. Hence we cannot say that the empirical is not cancelled, inspite of the fact that every morning we find it there i.e., inspite of its apparent continuity. What is then which is never cancelled ? It is the self or *ātman* which is never cancelled. It may appear that even the self is cancelled in deep sleep. But the Advaitin urges that the self does not mean the ego or the *antaḥkāraṇa*, and in sleep only the ego disappears and not the self. The real nature of the self is that of pure consciousness which is self-evident (*svayamjyotiḥ* or *svamprakāśa*) and pure, never affected by the presence or absence of objects. Evidently the self or consciousness which is the pre-supposition of all cancellation can never be cancelled ; all objects or contents of consciousness may be cancelled but not consciousness or knowledge itself. Self is self-evident, it shines by its own light. Only that which is self-illuminated can never be cancelled ; anything which is illuminated by something else, i.e., is relative to a particular consciousness, cannot be *trikālābādhita*. All objects of consciousness whether mental or physical are only *dṛśya* and not the *draṣṭā*. Only the *draṣṭā* or pure consciousness which is *svataḥ siddha* can be *trikālābādhita*. It can be shown logically how the *trikālābādhita sat* or the self must be at once self-evident, necessary existent, pure and universal Being.

When it is said that the *trikālābādhita* reality is of the nature of Pure Being what is meant is that it is of the nature of identity. Becoming or change does not form any necessary part of it ; there is nothing in it *to become*, it

exists *wholly*. In experience we find both identity and change. Consistently only one can be accepted as real. Advaitism accepts identity and rejects change as illusory. The argument is that while difference presupposes identity, the latter does not presuppose the former. The consciousness of change is more fundamental than change itself ; mere change without a consciousness of it is inconceivable. Hegel in the West and the Sāṃkhya in the East regard both identity and change as real. Neither of them can satisfactorily answer the question as to what is common between identity and change to make them both real. The Sāṃkhya keeps the two, identity and change, apart from each other, while Hegel regards them as necessary correlatives. The difficulty for the Sāṃkhya is to show how there can be two absolutely independent entities and how there can be conceived any relation between them. The problem for Hegel is to show how the two, namely, identity and difference, being mutually dependent can be distinguished ; the distinction will imply something more fundamental than the two, which is inconceivable. The absolute reality must therefore be posited to be free from all difference, change and relatedness ; there is no element of negation in it.

Consciousness which is Pure Being is also universal Being. Nothing is so self-contradictory as to say that knowledge can know its own absence. We can speak of the absence of particulars only, and that with reference to a locus. The most primordial difference which makes the cognition of all other differences possible is that of subject and object.¹ In the absence of subject-object distinc-

1 cf. Śaṅkara, *Māṇḍūkya Up. Bhāṣya* III, 7, ātma-bhedakṛto vyavahāro mithyā.

tion there can be no standpoint and hence no cognition of difference, as for instance, in deep sleep when the ego is temporarily inactive. The waking life in which all distinctions are made is the function of the ego. Thus the object-object difference presupposes subject-object difference. This latter difference is denied in the famous declaration *tat tvam asi* or *aham Brahmasmi*. The subject and the object cannot be absolutely different; otherwise the latter cannot be *immediate* to the former. Immediacy requires identity. In the dictum *tat tvam asi*, the *tat* or the given is universal but not self-evident while *tvam* (the ego) is self-evident but not universal. The meaning of the assertion *that thou art* is that what is self-evident (Thou or ego) is also universal. Brahman is everywhere; it underlies all (*ayamātmā sarvāntaraḥ*). Brahman is our very self or else it could not be unconditionally immediate or self-evident (*sākṣād aparokṣāt*). All particularity is false or dependent; only the universal is real.

The self-evidence of Being means that it is not *jaḍa* or inert or an other to self. What is inert stands in need of evidence, and not what is conscious, *caitanya*. If knowledge stood in need of evidence, there would be utter darkness; nothing other than consciousness can reveal consciousness. Being cannot remain unknown; that is, it cannot be *jaḍa* or *dṛśya* or appearance. What appears is not Being; the real cannot appear. The real is known and also unknown; known because it is unconditionally immediate and self-evident (*sākṣād aparokṣāt*) and unknown because it does not appear or is *avyavahārya*. All mediate knowledge presupposes immediate knowledge or direct knowledge; otherwise there will be *infinite regress*. Self-evidence does not mean that knowledge is both its own subject and object as Hegel would

have it ; because that would imply as if there were parts in knowledge or Being. Self-evidence means its immediacy and unrelatedness. (*aparokṣa yet avidya*).

It may be objected that the concept of pure Being or pure Consciousness is only an abstraction and is not a matter of experience; because experience reveals to us both difference and identity together. Pure identity is never experienced. The Vedāntic answer to this is that since pure Being, by its very nature cannot be an object of judgmental or relative consciousness, we can experience it only in *nirvikalpa samādhi* where the difference between subject and object disappears. If it be necessary to point out an actual experience of identity or pure Being the Vedāntin would refer to the experience of sleep which is the nearest approach to *nirvikalpa samādhi*.

It is universally admitted that in deep sleep there is no consciousness of change or difference or objects. Is it because there is no consciousness at all in deep sleep or is it because the phenomenal world simply dissolves into nothing ? It may appear difficult to admit that the phenomenal world becomes nothing in sleep, because after sleep we find it there ; but on analysis it may be found more difficult to admit that there is no consciousness whatsoever in sleep. In sleep we do not know anything ; when we get up we say, "I had such a sound sleep that I knew nothing." The question is : how is this ignorance of things during sleep known ? Evidently there cannot be any differentiated consciousness of the form 'I do not know anything' during the sleep itself, because then there would be no sound sleep. In sleep there is a factual absence of it. The statement that 'I did not know' cannot be an inference, because there is no process involved in the knowledge 'I knew nothing ;'

we do not have any major premise and any middle term. Hence it must be admitted that the *knowledge of ignorance* in sleep is direct and immediate, that is, in sleep there is not the utter absence of consciousness; there is consciousness, only this consciousness is not relational, judging or differentiated consciousness but pure consciousness, which illumines the ignorance in sleep as it were, and this experience becomes the basis of the statement 'I knew nothing'. Thus the analysis of sleep-experience reveals the presence and the possibility of an experience of pure unity, of *consciousness without self-consciousness*; and the pure Being of the Vedānta remains no more an abstraction. The objection as to why the phenomenal world is not known, if both consciousness and the world remain there in sleep, overlooks the fact that for the experience of phenomena it is not merely consciousness but a *particular* consciousness that is needed; its experience is relative to a particular or self-differentiating consciousness or *antahkarana* or mind; in the absence of this ego or a particular standpoint the objective differences cannot be experienced. The objective differences presuppose for their emergence the subject-object difference; the distinction of subject and object is the *fundamental illusion*. During sleep, when the subject is not active, only an undifferentiated mass is experienced in the form of general ignorance; this is why self-consciousness is not possible during sleep. For self-consciousness it is necessary that the subject should be able to detach itself from the object and for this detachment it is necessary that there should be a transition from one object to another object. So long as the self is confronted with only one

object and is *always* confronted with it, the self cannot know itself as subject i.e., self-consciousness is not possible. Thus the many is necessary for, or is correlated not to, the self as such but, to the subject; differences are necessary not for identity (self) but for the *knowledge of identity* or self-consciousness. The self without self-consciousness is pure unity.

X

The Dialectic of the Vedānta

In the Vedānta the unity of Brahman is sought to be established indirectly by a critique of difference which shows that difference is neither perceptible nor conceivable. If it is said that difference is perceived, the question arises whether in perception we see only difference or all the three elements, namely difference, its ground and its correlate (that which is differentiated and that from which it is differentiated and the difference itself). We cannot see only difference, because it is meaningless without its ground and its correlate, i.e., *dharmī* and *prativogī*. If, however, all the three are perceived, the question is : are they known simultaneously or successively ? As before, difference cannot be seen first; nor can we see the *dharmī* and the *prativogī* without the difference which characterises them. If it is supposed that all the three are simultaneously seen, then the question is : do we see the three as distinct by nature (*svarūpataḥ*) or does the distinction of the one depend upon the other ? The first is not possible because when milk and water are mixed, we see neither the difference nor the *dharmī* and the *prativogī*. Similarly, the other alternative is not possible, because if it is held that they depend on each other, we are involved in a circle. Further as an entity

is distinguished from all the rest, in perceiving an entity we should be perceiving the entire universe as its correlate. This is not at all borne out by experience. Hence it is concluded that difference cannot be seen.

Nor is it possible to define 'difference' logically. If 'difference' is real, it is either the essential nature of the thing or a quality or a relation. If difference is taken to be a quality then the difference between the quality and the qualified must also be a quality, and so on *ad infinitum*. If difference is conceived as a relation, then it already presupposes a difference in the relata, and again we are landed into an infinite regress. If however, difference is conceived as the very nature of the thing i.e., its uniqueness, as Nyāya does in its conception of the *viśeṣas* or as the Buddhist does in his conception of the *svalakṣaṇa* or as Leibniz does in his conception of the indiscernibility of the monads, then there arise many difficulties. Firstly if the differents are absolutely unique and self-dependent then they must also contain their relations to the rest of the distincts, i.e., it should be possible from the perception of a *viśeṣa*, for example, to know how it is different from all the rest. But it is not possible; the knowledge of the difference requires the knowledge of the *prativogī*; difference is always 'difference from' and hence it cannot be absolute. Another difficulty in the conception of absolute difference is that it is only *a priori* and never a matter of experience. Hence the concept of difference is logically inconceivable.

Hegelian thinkers point out that if the concept of utter difference is logically unsound, the concept of pure identity is equally absurd. Identity without difference is sheer abstraction; both must be necessarily related, because one gives meaning to the other. Hence reality

must be conceived on the pattern of identity-in-difference and neither as pure difference nor as pure identity.

The logic of identity-in-difference is inherently defective. If unity and difference are *necessarily* related to each other, then both are interdependent and none can be found in the absence of the other. And if this were so, the result would be that the one could not be distinguished from the other. In order to be distinguished it is absolutely necessary that at least one of the two must be found independently of the other ; otherwise they would become one piece without any fissure¹ to distinguish them. We could not even call them two, because that already presupposes the distinction. Two things that are eternally co-present or correlated cannot be known as two ; the body and the soul, the particular and the universal, the cause and the effect, and all other such opposites could not be distinguished if at least one of them were not to be had in separation from the other. In the case of cause-effect relation, can we say that the effect is as necessary to the cause as the cause is to the effect ? The effect is no doubt dependent on the cause, but is the cause also dependent on the effect ? Evidently not, because if that were so, we could never know the cause ; the cause would always be found either with the effect or in the form of it. Everything possible would be actual ; there being no potential cause, there would be no change. But this is not so ; there is a transition from the cause to the effect, and the transition means that there is a state in which the cause is found without the effect.

1 cf. Spinoza, *Ethics* I, Prop. 15 Scholium. 'In the case of things, which are really distinct one from the other, one can exist without the other, and can remain in its original condition.'

The same can be said about identity and difference ; the consciousness of difference presupposes identity or identical consciousness which makes the transition or contrast felt ; but the identical consciousness does not require any change or difference.¹ Hence identity is more fundamental than difference and is independent of it. Moreover, identical consciousness, as is brought out by an analysis of sleep experience, is not a mere abstraction but a fact of experience. No doubt, for thought the ego and the non-ego are correlates, but there is no obligation to conceive reality on the pattern of thought.

Brahman then must be understood to be self-evident Pure Being. Pure unity alone is real, but on account of the empirical habits of thought people imagine that something devoid of all differences will be only a blank or zero² ; they imagine that differences alone give content or richness to reality ; while the fact is that differences, if anything, only negate the infinite or prevent it from being experienced. Critics of Spinoza point out that pure being is as good as nothing and so, cannot give rise to the phenomenal world. This question refers to the causality of substance. But before that question is taken up it is necessary to meet the objections of the critics who are reluctant to admit the transcendence of Spinoza's substance as pure unity and mistake it either for a mere titular head or a totality of modes or a unity of attributes.

1 cf. Lotze *Microcosmus*, II, P. 680. "all self-consciousness rests upon the foundation of a direct sense of self which can by no means arise from becoming aware of a contrast with the external world but is itself the reason that this contrast can be felt as unique, as not comparable to any other distinction between two objects."

2 cf. Śaṅkara, *Chāndogya Up.* VII, i, Introduction. digdeśa-guṇagati phala bheda śūnyam hi Paramārtha sad advayam brahma mandabuddhīnām, asad iva pratibhāti.

XI

Misinterpretations of Substance

Mostly it is the realists like Martineau and Pollock who have failed to understand the absolutism of Spinoza. Idealists of the Neo-Hegelian type like Caird and Joachim are also to be classed with the realists in so far as both are predisposed to accept the reality of the phenomena. Once Thought and Extension are taken to be real, it is impossible to understand substance correctly. It will be illuminating to examine here some wrong representations of Spinoza's substance.

Martineau suggests that to Spinoza the world "was the co-equal development and expression of two substances never separate though never interacting," and then "the problem was to find a formula or conception in which these opposites (Thought and Extension) could pass and be united."¹ "They were the working factors of his speculation though not its titular head. He thus wrought out, in the first instance, a dualistic philosophy ; and then by a prefatory stroke of thought or of assumption, converted it into a monism."² Martineau thinks that the only problem of Spinoza was to assert a unity of the Cartesian substances which he had accepted. He points out³ that it is not without reason that Spinoza speaks of 'created substances,' and also of Thought and Extension as substances, and gives of 'Attributes' the same definition which he afterwards assigns to Substance.

1 Martineau *Types*, Vol. I, P. 293.

2 Martineau, *Study*, P. 167.

3 Ibid P. 169.

Martineau's interpretation is an instance of how people raise the dust first and then complain that they cannot see ; they put a wrong emphasis at the outset and feel puzzled at the end. To draw attention to the world or to the Attributes first is to forget Spinoza's explicit and emphatic utterance that in his philosophy it is not our view of things but the concept of God that is the governing element. Martineau's view over-looks the fact that Spinoza was more obsessed with unity than with plurality. Spinoza's problem was not to find a place for God but to find a place for Thought and Extension, the so-called substances ; he was sure of the ultimate unity of things or of substance. He could not accept the concept of 'created substance' ; because that jeopardizes the definition of substance on the one hand and implies "creation out of nothing" on the other. Again, the view that there are two eternal substances is still farther from truth as it does not seem to believe in anything absolute. Nor could Spinoza bless the theory of emanation which suggested the rise of matter from spirit. He had therefore to evolve a conception which would avoid all the above defects and would interfere least with the absoluteness of God. This he did by suggesting that Thought and Extension are Attributes *only*. While Martineau stresses the Cartesian influence, he seems to ignore the Neo-Platonic influence on Spinoza. Again, he does not seem to take into consideration the infinite Attributes of Substance.

Even the quotations that Martineau gives do not support him unambiguously ; firstly, another explanation of them is possible, and secondly, Spinoza expressly fights against the inferences Martineau draws. When Spinoza speaks of Thought and Extension as 'created

substances' or even as substances, he only appears to use the then current expression, and does not express his own views. When D'Vries suggests¹ that it may be supposed that each substance has only one attribute and so Thought and Extension may be regarded as substances, Spinoza does not accept the suggestion and points out that Thought and Extension are not two but one and the same thing with different names which "the intellect attributes" to substance. In the scholium to Prop. 10, Part I of the *Ethics* also he says the same thing ; "though two attributes are, in fact, conceived as distinct.....yet you cannot therefore conclude that they constitute two entities or two different substances. For it is the nature of substance that each of its attributes is conceived through itself.....It is then far from absurdity to ascribe several attributes to one substance." Thought and Extension cannot be regarded as substances because they are only relatively infinite of their own kind and not absolutely infinite. And if they are called substances, then that which is absolutely infinite must be given some other name. Spinoza accepts many degrees of indeterminacy but he cannot accept many absolutes ; it is just to safeguard against misunderstanding that he is chary of calling it even one, as it may suggest that substance is countable ; in the realm of the absolute, number is out of place ; "it is certain that he who calls God one or single has no true idea of God."²

"If the Attributes are separate determining causes, having nothing in common with one another except their co-presence in all being, there is no proper unity

1 *Correspondence* VIII, P. 104 and IX, P. 107.

2 *Ibid* L. P. 270.

in the Substance to which they belong ; for the mere housing of a number of agencies foreign to each other does not constitute it ; there cannot be a subject with only disparate predicates.”¹ This is perhaps the greatest difficulty of Martineau and many others. The question is : can the predicates of a subject be disparate or not ? When we say that an apple has colour, size, smell, taste, etc., are the predicates disparate or not ? Is there anything common to colour, size, taste etc. ? There seems to be nothing common, and yet they seem to form a unity. Thus it is a fact that a subject has disparate predicates and yet has unity ; we do not have ‘X is X’ type of judgments. Hence it is obvious that it is not the disparity of predicates that militates against the unity of the subject but something else. The unity of substance is *at stake only if the predicates also begin to claim the same status and reality as the substance, and not when they are of a lower status i.e., when they are mere attributes or ascriptions.* If Martineau is not able to see the unity of Substance, it is not because there is none, but because he does not take attributes to be merely attributes but as substances and then tries to see a common factor. If attributes are taken as attributes, unity will not only be possible but necessary ; they cannot stand by themselves. In fact there is something common in the attributes also, and that is their *relative* infinity which indicates that they belong to something *absolutely* infinite.

Wolf’s view of Spinoza’s substance is that substance is not a mere titular head but “the unified totality of attributes.”² Prof. Hallett also seems to subscribe to

¹ Martineau, *Study* P. 183.

² P. A. S. XXVII (1926-27), P. 179.

the same view when he says that "it is only because there are infinite transcripts of substance that substance can adequately be regarded as the unity of its transcripts without remainder,"¹ and that substance "consists of, not qualified by, infinite attributes."² Spinoza's use of the expression "consists of infinite attributes" in the Scholium to Prop. 10 Part I *Ethics* is said to lend support to it. Thus according to this view also there is nothing which transcends the infinite attributes; substance is the totality of attributes, and if it may be too difficult to grasp a totality of *infinite* attributes, Wolf relieves us by suggesting that Thought and Extension "may well be all the attributes."³

If the above view were logically sound and consistent with the general trend of Spinoza's thought, then the meaning put upon the above proposition could be admitted, but the view conceals many difficulties. Firstly, attributes are only relatively infinite, and a totality of relative infinities cannot give us an absolutely infinite substance in the Spinozistic sense. Moreover, it is not explained how the attributes that are so exclusively conceived can be unified unless it is in something transcendent. If Substance is, as Prof. Hallet thinks, a totality of transcripts without remainder, then each transcript taken singly must leave some remainder that is filled up by others in the totality. This means that none of the transcripts can express the totality wholly. This is contrary to Spinoza's contentions. Further, the transcripts can be understood either as repetitions or as

1 *Aeternitas* P. 299.

2 *Ibid.*, P. 291.

3 P. A. S. XXVII, P. 190.

incomplete expressions of substance. They are not repetitions because each attribute is utterly different ; they are not incomplete expressions because "there is no part or element" according to Prof. Hallett, "which is opaque to Thought or Extension." Thus it is difficult to accept any of the alternatives. It may be that the attributes are conceived to be different but complete expressions of substance; in that case one cannot imagine how that which expresses itself through different transcripts can itself be the unity of those transcripts. Reluctance to admit the existence of substance transcending the attributes is nothing short of playing into the hands of those critics who point out that there is nothing to bind the attributes together ; to say that substance is the unity of attributes is not to prove it. It implies also the error of defining substance in terms of attributes. Instead of wasting ingenuity in finding phrases to express the relation of substance and attributes, it is more reasonable to hold that the attributes cannot tamper with the unity of substance, because they belong to a different level, i.e., substance transcends the attributes. Substance must not be approached from the side of attributes ; rather, we should approach the attributes with the fixed notion that substance is unique and absolutely indeterminate, pure, Being. This view obviates the necessity of considering Spinoza's use of the expression "infinite attributes" as absurd and of suggesting that the two "may well be all" ; because then the infinite attributes of substance will mean the infinite indeterminateness of substance. 'The more reality a thing has the more attributes it has' means only that the more real it is the more indeterminate. It does not mean that the number of attributes gives content to substance. Substance is

self-conceived and self-existent, absolutely infinite and independent.

It is true, no doubt, that so far as the phenomenal world is concerned, there appears to be nothing more than the modes of Thought and Extension; but we cannot therefore admit that world is for that reason nothing beyond the manifestation of these two ; because they are not absolute but only relative and hence require a ground. Pollock does not seem to admit this when he says that Spinoza "follows in form and even in language the example made familiar by theologians and philosophers, under theological influence or pressure, who had undertaken to prove the existence of a being apart from and above the universe."¹ Here the suggestion is that Spinoza's God is more a show than a reality. Pollock here does not mean to emphasise the immanence of substance but its identity with the actual universe, because he says that substance "is indeed manifested in the Attributes but there is not an inaccessible reality behind the manifestations. The manifestations are themselves reality ; substance consists of the attributes and no reality other than theirs."² This view is different from the above two views in that it identifies substance with the actual universe of finite things. As to the question, if substance is merely the sum of things why Spinoza gives proofs for the existence of substance (after all we do not require a prophet to prove the existence of the universe), it is said that Spinoza is merely following a form. Pollock's view is that God's "determinate manifestations constitute and express his reality."³ According to

1 Pollock *Spinoza*, P. 154.

2 Ibid., P. 152.

3 Ibid., P. 166.

him Spinoza simply "provides an euthanasia for theology." His argument is as follows. Since God is not a being apart from the universe, since all that is possible is actual, and since nothing unknown can be admitted, God is nothing but the manifested universe. The infinity of attributes is explained simply as the perfection of the universe.¹ Pollock seeks further support from Spinoza's use of the expression 'Nature or Universe' for substance.

Pollock's interpretation, as shown above, to say the least, over-simplifies matters and makes Spinoza appear as if he did not mean what he wrote. If it could be seen that the immanence of God does not militate against his transcendence, this view would have not been advanced. If God were not transcendent all the divisions and changes of the empirical universe would have to be attributed to God, something which Spinoza rejects explicitly when he says that "no attribute of substance can be truly conceived, from which it would follow that Substance can be divided into parts"² and that number, measure and time are only aids to imagination. Further, Spinoza makes a distinction between substance and '*facies totius universi*' a distinction without which the two would be identical ; but it suits³ Pollock to understand '*facies totius universi*,' as a mode of Extension alone and not of the whole of Substance. When Spinoza says that all that is possible is actual, he does not mean that God has actually exhausted and pulverised himself into the modes ; that would mean the end of God. It only means a denial of the potentiality in God in the form of

1 Pollock *Spinoza*, Pp. 155-156.

2 *Ethics* I, Prop. 10.

3 Pollock *Spinoza*, Pp. 176 ff.

will ; because in God there is no distinction of intellect and will ; there is nothing like God withholding his powers voluntarily. Again, the infinity of attributes need not make us enquire whether Spinoza believed in an unknowable reality ; that would be like pressing Spinoza to walk into a rubric created by the modern mind. It is argued that if substance is self-conceived, we must either know all the infinite attributes, or attributes other than Thought and Extension must be superfluous, or we must surrender to agnosticism. This argument betrays a failure to understand that there is a sense in which God is really unknowable ; and in fact a recognition of this itself is symptomatic of our insight into His infinity. Moreover, if attributes were things-in-themselves, then alone our ignorance of them would be agnosticism ; but being subjective they are not in reality, and hence the question of agnosticism does not arise. God is unknowable *conceptually*, but He can be known *intuitively*. The infinity of God's attributes means only the absolute indeterminateness of God.

CHAPTER IV

SUBSTANCE (Contd.)

I

The Causality of the Absolute

We are entering here upon the most crucial problem of philosophy, namely, the problem of creation. It is in tackling this problem that the real merit of Spinozism is seen ; because here alone is our strict adherence to the conception of God as the Absolute most needed. The problem is : If God is unchangeable pure Being, how does the world follow from him ? Spinoza is generally thought to be most unsatisfactory in his answer ; because, it is said, if he sticks to his conception of substance as pure unity, he must answer the charge of acosmism¹ ; if, however, he holds that substance changes itself in the form of the world, then he must give up the notion of substance as pure unity.² A similar dilemma is anticipated in the *Brahma Sūtras* (II, i, 26) also. If Brahman is the material cause of the world, it must be changeable, otherwise it will not be the material cause, and the scriptural texts will be false.

1 Hegel. *History of Philosophy*, Vol. III p. 281.

2 Flint. *Anti-Theistic Theories*. 6th Edition p. 375. 'If the absolute substance must express itself necessarily and completely in its attributes, it must be absorbed and exhausted in these attributes ; and they in turn must necessarily and completely evolve into modes, only modes will remain. In this case the monism of Spinoza must inevitably disintegrate and dissolve into monadism, his pantheism into atheism or naturalism.'

The Vedāntic way of solving the above difficulty is to point out that it arises because we have a wrong notion of causality. By an analysis of the different views of causality, Vedānta arrives at the conclusion that all change is illusory, and hence Brahman does not change. It will be our endeavour to show how this view is established and then to point out that Spinoza too, though not very explicitly, follows the same path.

Change in a thing is possible either by an action on it from something outside or by some kind of self-manifestation, i.e., manifestation of its own inherent nature. In the former case, there is transeunt causality; in the latter there is immanent causality. The Nyāya and the Sāṃkhya are the typical representatives of the two views. For the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika reality is not self-evolving and hence the acceptance of a transeunt cause becomes necessary, and for the same reason, it also becomes imperative to take cause and effect as two distinct entities. The effect is a new creation; it is something that was non-existent before. Hence the significant name of the doctrine, *asat-kāryavāda* or *ārambbavāda*. The Buddhists also believe that cause and effect are utterly distinct, but the Naiyāyikas differ from the Buddhist in an important respect. For the latter there is no relation between the cause and the effect except that of temporal succession; everything is unique and momentary. This is almost a denial of causation. The Naiyāyika holds that even though cause and effect are different entities, yet the two are not unrelated; the relation between them is one of inherence (*samavāya*).

The Sāṃkhya holds that the cause and the effect cannot be utterly different, and supports its thesis by

giving arguments against the Nyāya. In the first instance it shows that the view that cause and effect are different from each other or that the effect is not pre-existent in the cause is contrary to experience. If the effect were non-existent in the cause, it would be mere nothing ; because the non-existent cannot be brought into being by any amount of activity. The son of a barren woman or the sky-lotus cannot be brought into existence. Again, if the non-existent were really capable of being produced, our search for specific substances to have specific effects from them, e.g., cotton for the production of yarn, milk for the production of butter, would be inexplicable. It is a fact of common experience that for butter we churn only milk and not water, and that for the most excellent reason that butter is already present in the milk and not in the water. If the non-existent could be produced, why should we not be in a position to produce all things everywhere, non-existence of things being available everywhere. ? That such is not the case disproves the previous non-existence of the effect in the cause. If the Naiyāyika says that it is not only the efficient cause but also the material cause that is needed, he will have to admit that the particular material cause is necessary because the effect is presumed to be there, i.e., is existent in the cause. Only that which is potentially efficient, i.e. that which contains the effect within itself, can produce that effect and nothing else. Moreover, the effect is seen to have the same characteristics as the cause, as for example, if the thread is black and of fine count, the effect, cloth, also is similarly black, of fine count etc. This is to say that the two are identical in nature, otherwise the similarity cannot be explained. Also, the effect does not exist in any time and place

different from that of the cause. This means that the effect is in the cause potentially.

This is how the Sāṃkhya establishes the doctrine of *satkāryavāda* or *pariṇāmavāda*. Transeunt causality is rejected, and substance or *Prakṛti* is asserted to be both the material as well as efficient cause ; the identity of cause and effect is maintained ; change is taken to be real. But even though the Sāṃkhya emphasises the continuity of cause and effect, the two are not taken to be completely identical. There is some difference between the two ; in one case substance is manifest, in the other it is unmanifest. Were it not so, the clay should hold water even as the pot does ; unless there is a manifestation of determinate forms, there can be no empirical utility. Cause and effect differ as the more indeterminate and the less indeterminate ; the most indeterminate Being is the *Prakṛti*, the ultimate cause of things.

The Sāṃkhya does not give a satisfactory answer to the question why the *Prakṛti*, if it is self-evolving, should ever remain in a state of equilibrium or *sāmyāvasthā*. *Puruṣa* is said to set *Prakṛti* into motion somehow by its mere presence. This amounts to an admission of transeunt causality. Further, it is not explained how there can be two substances *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* without interfering with each other's independence and indeterminateness.

To avoid the above difficulties it may be held that there is only one substance which is self-evolving. If so, the question is : is the self-manifestation of substance real or unreal ? If it is real, then both cause and effect are equally real. Then, are the cause and the effect completely different or identical and different both ? For

reasons already shown, they cannot be utterly different. They must therefore be both identical and different. In this view it may be asked, if substance is self-evolving, what prevents it from evolving itself out utterly, i.e., why and how does the cause maintain part of its identity in the course of self-manifestation ? And if it does, how is the identical portion related to the portion that is changed ? It is evident that the identical portion plays no part, and the view reduces itself to *asatkāryavāda*.

The above analysis shows that transeunt causality cannot be avoided even in a monistic system so long as the effect is regarded as a real emergence. An effect has two characteristics : a necessary dependence upon the cause and novelty. It appears that both cannot be equally emphasised. If novelty is exclusively emphasised, cause and effect become unconnected ; if, however, necessary dependence or identity is asserted production becomes meaningless. It is remarkable that the denial of real change or transformation is arrived at from two opposite directions, namely, *satkāryavāda* and *asatkāryavāda*. The Nyāya view, if pushed logically, leads to the extreme position of the Buddhists, who deny transformation and accept only emergence. Much the same way, the *satkāryavāda* of the Sāṃkhya logically culminates in the *vivartavāda* of the Vedānta. Like the Nyāya, the Buddhists emphasise novelty and difference of the effect and do it to such an extent as to deny even *upādāna kāraṇa* or the material cause. Similarly the Vedānta and the Sāṃkhya agree to emphasise the identity of cause and effect, and also to repudiate nihilism and transeunt causality, but the Vedānta emphasises identity so much that even *abhiivyakti* or manifestation is denied. The simple logic applied here is that if the effect is new, it

cannot be real, for the real is already there; and if it is real, it cannot be new. The Vedānta achieves a synthesis by pointing out that the two, the cause and the effect, must be of two different levels, the one real and the other unreal. If both are regarded as real, at least the relation between the two must be unreal. But there cannot be an unreal relation between two reals; one of the two must be unreal. It is in this manner that the Vedānta while accepting the novelty of the effect or the dependent establishes its unreality and illusoriness. If any relation between identity and change (cause and effect) is untenable, it is because one of the relata is untenable or unreal. But since identity is more fundamental than difference, it is the latter and not the former that is to be rejected as false. If, however, change must be accounted for, and if reality cannot own it, the explanation must be sought in the perceiver of change, that is to say, change must be regarded as subjective or epistemic; it is only an appearance and nothing in itself. This is *vivartavāda*; the logical conclusion of *satkāryavāda* is only *vivartavāda* which reduces the problem of causality to the problem of illusion. Change is proved to be illusory or a mere appearance; identity alone is real. The origin of our consciousness of change is thus epistemic rather than metaphysical; illusion alone is the cause of the appearance of change; there can be no *real* change.

The essence of *vivartavāda* is firstly that it regards the Absolute both as the material and efficient cause of the world and thus rejects transeunt causality. The Absolute being the sole cause, the world may be spoken of as part of or as existing in God. Secondly, *vivartavāda* means that although God is the material and efficient cause of

the universe in identity (*abbhinānimittopādāna-kāraṇa*) yet the universe does not inhere in or in any sense constitute the former or the real ; the identity of God is untouched as He is unchangeable ; the world does not form a necessary part of the real but is only its appearance. Thus it would not be self-contradictory to say on the one hand that the world is in God or that modes are part of God and on the other that the world of the senses is only in imagination.

Spinoza does not give us any elaborate theory of causation, but from the general principles that he accepts it is possible to show that he too believed in *vivartavāda* or in the illusoriness of change. Firstly, he asserts the identity of cause and effect and says : "Of two things having nothing in common between them one cannot be the cause of the other".¹ This is why Spinoza rejects Thought and Extension as created substances ; he accepts them only as attributes. If God had created Thought and Extension, He would have been one with them ; but God could not be determinate or relatively infinite as they are, and hence they must *not* be regarded as effects but only as what the understanding conceives as constituting the essence of God. It is only when God is conceived as these that He can be said to be the *cause of their respective modes*; otherwise He is beyond all these.² This is why, again, Spinoza makes frequent use of the expression *quatenus* almost at every place where misunderstanding is

1 *Ethics* I Prop. 3. Also *Correspondence* IV p. 83 "when the effect has nothing in common with its cause, then whatsoever it might have, it would have from nothing."

2 *Ethics* II Prop. 6.

possible, an expression which some critics¹ regard only as a way of escape. The assertion of the identity of cause and effect means a rejection of transeunt causality and also of teleological creation along with that. Secondly, Spinoza relegates the world of sense to the realm of imagination.² This means that he does not consider the world to be constitutive of substance, but only an appearance of it. Thus essentially he may be said to be in agreement with the fundamental points of *vivartavāda*, and it is upto the exponents to interpret his philosophy on that line. It is for this reason that we said that the most revolutionary change that Spinoza introduced *was not in the conception of God but in the conception of God's causality*.

II

Spinoza's View of Divine Causality

Prof. Wolfson gives³ us a list of ascriptions which the medievals attributed to God as cause and which Spinoza has accepted but with "an implication that these causes are more truly applicable to his own conception of God's causality than to theirs." God is, according to Spinoza, a universal, efficient, essential, first, principal, free and immanent cause. Spinoza adds only the last to this list ; the remaining are easily admitted by all. But even of the remaining, he puts a new meaning into some, at least in the conception of the universal cause and the free cause. He argues that if God is regarded as free cause creation cannot be teleological. Similarly,

1 Caird p. 166

2 Cf. Spinoza contrasts the real and the modal in *Ethics* I Scholium to Prop. 15 "parts are distinguished *not really but modally*".

3 *The Philosophy of spinoza* Vol. I, P. 304.

if God is to be regarded as the universal cause, the world cannot be finite. Thus from the very concepts that are admitted by the Theologians, he derives doctrines that are contrary to theirs. As regards his substitution of the concept of immanent cause for that of the transeunt, he points out that on the one hand the concept of transeunt causality involves insurmountable difficulties, and on the other, the fears which prevent the theologians from regarding God as the immanent cause are baseless; and hence the concept of immanent cause must be admitted. Spinoza does not introduce anything new; he only demands that God should be taken more seriously¹ and with a greater freedom of mind and consistency.

Before we proceed to understand Spinoza's conception of immanent causality, his idea of God's freedom and his denial of will and teleology, it would be worthwhile to note here certain remarkable points regarding his conception of divine causality. Firstly, according to Spinoza a cause is to be understood in no other sense than that of a presupposition or a condition. This is why a thing cannot be known adequately until its presupposition or cause is known. Creation i.e., conditioning, does not imply any change in God. That He is the cause of all things in the same sense in which he is the cause of himself (*Ethics* I Scholium to Prop. 25) means that God does not actually become any thing. This conditioning is of two kinds: there is a sense in which the infinite is the condition of the finite but there is another sense in which the finite also is a condition of

1 Cf. Russell. "Leibniz, whenever he treats God at all seriously, falls involuntarily into a Spinozistic pantheism." *Philosophy of Leibniz*, Pp. 185-186.

the finite. In the former sense God is the cause of every finite thing, both of its existence as well as essence ;¹ nothing can exist or be conceived of without God. But this does not mean that God is directly the cause of finite things ; "that which is finite and has conditioned existence cannot be produced by the absolute nature of any attribute of God. For whatsoever follows from the absolute nature of any attribute of God is infinite and eternal."² (Ethics I Prop.21). Nor does it mean that God is to be regarded as "the remote cause of individual things except for the sake of distinguishing these from what he immediately produces."³ If by remote we understand something which is in no way conjoined to the effect," then God is not the remote cause ; if however by remote is understood not the immediate but the ultimate presupposition then God may be called the remote cause of things. God is the cause of finite things through some intermediaries of which he is absolutely the proximate cause. This is the second important point to be noted. The immediate condition of a finite thing is another finite thing which itself is conditioned by a third finite thing and so on *ad infinitum*⁴. Thus Spinoza believes in a double causality. This is nothing strange to one who is familiar with the Vedāntic distic-

1 *Ethics* I, Prop. 25 Cf. Alexander Shanks 'An Introduction to Spinoza's *Ethics*, P. 60, says : "Spinoza's conception of mode involves a double regress, first in relation to the essences, which follow from God, and second, in the causal determinations of these as actually existing things."

2 *Ethics* I, Prop. 28 Proof.

3 *Ibid* I, Prop. 28 Scholium.

4 *Ibid* I, Prop. 28.

tion of the *Pārmāthika* and the *Vyāvahārika* ways of looking upon things.

III

God is the Immanent Cause

There are serious logical difficulties owing to which Spinoza seems to have accepted God's immanent causality in exclusion to all other alternatives. The traditional view of God as the transeunt cause of the universe meant either the emanation of matter out of God or the operation of incorporeal God on corporeal matter. Both these views are defective. The emanation of matter out of God who is spirit or non-material, that is who has nothing in common with matter, amounts to saying that matter was created out of nothing ; because "Things which have nothing in common cannot be one the cause of the other."¹ Moreover, it would imply that substance can be created, which means a denial of the conception of substance as self-conceived and self-existent. The other view, which is like the Demiurgic conception of creation believing in two eternal substances, appears to be blind to the implication that the existence of two eternal substances militates against the absoluteness of either. Further, it is not intelligibly explained as to how incorporeal God can act on corporeal matter ; the obscurity is of the same kind as is found in the case of the Sāṃkhya with regard to its view that the mere presence of pure consciousness or Puruṣa is enough to set Prakṛti, which is absolutely inert, in motion. Thus both the views appear to be unsatisfactory, and the immanent causality of God is found to be the only option.

¹ *Ethics* I, Prop. 3.

It should be useful to examine the reasons why theologians hesitated to ascribe immanent causality to God. Firstly, it was feared that by accepting God as the immanent cause it would be necessary to attribute extension to God, and together with that, divisibility and change. Secondly, to make God the immanent cause of the world would be nothing short of making him responsible for all the evil in the world.¹ As regards the first difficulty, Spinoza meets the opponent on his own ground and points out that it is wrong to hold that Extension is divisible, and that it cannot be infinite. The belief that extension is finite and divisible is based on the view that it is composed of finite parts, which is absurd. It is not the conception of an infinite quantity but the conception of it as composed of parts that is inconsistent ; because that would be no less absurd "than it would be to assert that a solid is made up of surfaces, a surface of lines, and a line of points."² "For if extended substance could be so divided that its parts were really separate, why should not one part admit of being destroyed, the others remaining joined together as before ? And why should all be so fitted into one another as to leave no vacuum ?"³ Hence the continuity and also the infinity of extension must be admitted. The reason why the upholders of the opposite view think of quantity as made up of parts is that they look at it from the point of view of imagination and not of the intellect.

To regard God as the transeunt cause for the sake of keeping him free from the imperfections of the world

¹ *Correspondence* XVIII and XX Blyenhergh's letters to Spinoza.

² *Ethics* I scholium to Prop. 15.

³ *Ibid* I scholium to Prop. 15

is nothing short of ignoring his omnipotence. If evil in the world is real, it is impossible to save God from shouldering the responsibility whether He be the transeunt cause or the immanent cause. If evil is really there in the world, it is either because He wills it or because He cannot help it. In either case He is imperfect. *Hence the only way of saving the situation is to show that evil is unreal* and this is what Spinoza does when he points out that the notions of Good and Bad are only relative to our desires and are nothing in themselves. Spinoza says explicitly that "if you can show that Evil, Error or Villainy etc., is something which expresses essence then I will fully admit to you that God is the cause of villainy, evil, error, etc."¹ He points out that such evil things as Nero's matricide have no essence or positive element in them and hence do not affect the nature of God. From the point of view of God everything is equally perfect; our point of view is only relative. To ask why one thing is less perfect than the other would be like asking why a circle is a circle. Similarly God as the transeunt cause cannot be said to be free from change ; because no change in matter can be brought about without a corresponding change in God also. Hence either change should be regarded as unreal or God as changeable. Spinoza accepts the former alternative.

Thus on the one hand the conception of transeunt causality is inconsistent and on the other the fears against immanent causality are groundless. But it must be noted that while Spinoza rejects the transeunt causality of God, he does not reject his transcendence ;

¹ *Correspondence* XXIII P. 190. Also XXI, Pp. 174-175.

because transeunt and transcendent are not identical. The rejection of the transeunt causality of God only means that God is the material as well as the efficient cause of the world. But by the material cause, we are not to understand that God actually materialises into the form of the world; because that would be negating his transcendence. The material cause of the world means the ground or the substance of the world. Thus the immanence of God, as already shown, does not mean a denial of His transcendence.¹

IV

Denial of Will in God

Almost the same motives which led the theologians to regard God as the transeunt cause have compelled them to conceive God's freedom as volition. It was felt that the perfection of God and his infinite power necessarily demanded that He should be regarded as free to do or not to do anything. Moreover, since there is to be seen in Nature so much of purpose and design, it is just proper to think that God has created the best of the many possible worlds. This view of God's freedom thus raises three questions: the question of God's intellect and will, of the distinction between the possible and the actual, and finally the problem of design in the Universe. Spinoza takes up all the three questions. He points out that the view of God's

1 cf. *Correspondence* LXXIII P. 343. "Like Paul, and perhaps also like all ancient philosophers, though in another way, I assert that all things live and move in God." But "those who think that the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* rests on this, namely, that God and Nature (by which they mean a certain mass, or corporeal matter) are one and the same, are entirely mistaken."

freedom as volition defeats its own purpose and hence freedom must be interpreted in some other manner.

While considering the simplicity of God, it was shown that Spinoza rejects the duality of intellect and will in God for the sake of maintaining His simplicity. He attacks this problem at different places and in different ways. Firstly, he points out that will cannot be attributed to God, and even if it were done, it would be homonymous rather than synonymous with human will; God's will cannot mean volition. "If intellect belongs to the divine nature, it cannot be in nature, as ours is generally thought to be, posterior to or simultaneous with the things understood, inasmuch as God is prior to all things by reason of his causality."¹ Further, since "the intellect of God is the cause of both the essence and the existence of our intellect," it must be different from ours. Human intellect is a mode like motion but not God's intellect.² The reasoning would be identical in the case of the will, as can easily be seen. Not feeling satisfied with this much, Spinoza puts the same thing negatively in Proposition 32 Part I in which he says that "will cannot be a free cause, but only a necessary cause," and concludes therefrom that "God does not act according to the freedom of the will." Again³ in Scholium 2 Proposition 33 he raises the same problem differently. Firstly, he contends that to hold that God could create a universe more or less perfect than

1 *Ethics* I, scholium to Prop. 17.

2 Ibid I, Prop. 32 Corollary 2 "will and intellect stand in the same relation to the nature of God as do motion and rest.

3 "Things could not have been brought into being by God in any other manner or any order different from that which has in fact obtained."

this would argue imperfection rather than perfection in God. Secondly, even if it be granted that will appertains to the essence of God, it nevertheless follows from his perfection that "things could not have been by him created other than they are, or in a different order." The reason is that if it is conceded that "it depends solely on the decree and will of God that each thing is what it is" and that "all, the decrees of God have been ratified from all eternity by God himself ;" then since "in eternity there is no such thing as when, before or after ;...it follows...that God never can decree, or never could have decreed anything but what is ; that God did not exist before his decrees, and would not exist without them." From all this it follows that God's freedom and power must not be understood as his infinite capacity for changing or willing.

Consequent upon the rejection of will in God is a change in the usual conception of the possible and the necessary. This question is taken up by Spinoza in Part I Proposition 33 Scholium I. "A thing is called necessary either in respect to its essence or in respect to its cause ; a thing can in no respect be called contingent save in relation to the imprefection of our knowledge. A thing of which we do not know whether the essence does or does not involve a contradiction, or of which knowing that it does not involve a contradiction, we are still in doubt concerning the existence, because the order of causes escapes us—such a thing, I say, cannot appear to us either necessary or impossible. Wherefore we call it contingent or possible."¹ Spinoza

¹ Also, see *Emendatione*, P. 16, *Ethics* IV, Definition 3, 4 *Cogitata Metaphysica*, 1, 3.

is aware that he is making a departure from the traditional views and says that "if any one wishes to call that contingent which I call possible, and possible what I call contingent I shall not contradict him."¹

The departure that Spinoza is making here is that he looks upon the question of the distinction between the possible and the necessary not from the metaphysical standpoint but from the epistemological standpoint. The conception of God's freedom as will or the capacity to give or withhold existence necessitated a distinction of the possible *per se* and the possible *per se but necessary by reason of its cause*. In Leibniz we find the same distinction in the form of the possible and the compossible. While infinite monads are conceivable and possible i.e., their essence is eternal, it is only the compossibles that actually exist ; the compossible is the possible plus existence given by God. To put it differently, while the possible are only in God's intellect the compossibles are in his will also. Thus the distinction is based necessarily on the distinction of intellect and will in God, which has already been rejected. The possible is according to Spinoza not what does not exist but that whose cause we do not know ; in respect to its cause every thing is necessary. The distinction between the possible and the compossible is not a distinction obtaining in things, but in the intellect only ; it is therefore an abstraction. Since God's intellect is identical with His will or power, everything conceivable or possible must be actual, and hence necessary. Another objection that may be raised against the Leib-

1 *Cogitata Metaphysica* I, 3.

nizian distinction is that it makes existence a predicate¹ which means that monads as having all the predicates inherent in them must necessarily exist. This is a self-contradiction. If existence be an accidental predicate, then God's existence itself will become accidental. Existence cannot be necessary in one case and accidental in the other. Hence, existence cannot be regarded as a predicate, and the distinction between the possible and the actual cannot be maintained. But the denial of the possible does not mean the rejection of this idea from the *vyāvahārika* or temporal experience. Empirically it is possible for one to take food or to go without it, but if we trace things to ultimate causes, whatever happens will be found to be necessary. That the actual and the possible are identical does not mean that we do not have any feeling of freedom or that we cannot imagine alternatives,² it only means that all that is, is necessary and not contingent. Spinoza does not mean that if the sunset is possible it is also actual, but that if it is, it is necessary and not contingent.

Thus the denial of will in God means three propositions : (1) that everything that is in God's intellect exists, the possible is actual, (2) that things could have been produced by God in no other manner, (3) and that things are created with the same perfection as that with which they exist in his intellect.³ In one

1 cf. Russell *Philosophy of Leibniz*, Pp. 183, 185.

2 cf. Alexander Shanks. *An Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics* Pp. 89-91. He argues that our freedom exists only in thought and is due to our ignorance of what will actually happen. Once an alternative has been accepted the other ceases to be a real alternative. Freedom exists only in the future i.e., in thought and for an omniscient being the future or alternatives do not exist.

3 cf. *Ethics* I, Props. 35 and 33 and scholium 2 to the latter.

word, creation in its extent, its perfection and its order is unchangeable and eternal. All these should be regarded as necessary. Created things are contingent not in the sense that they can be or could be changed but only in the sense that they are not self-dependent.

V

Denial of Teleology

From the denial of will in God a conclusion more important than necessary creation, is derived by Spinoza ; and that is the denial of design in the universe. In fact he seems to be more vehement against teleological creation than against arbitrary or volitional creation. "I confess that the theory which subjects all things to the will of an indifferent deity, and asserts that they are all dependent on his fiat, is less far from truth than the theory of those, who maintain that God acts in all things with a view of promoting what is good. For these latter persons seem to set up something beyond God, which does not depend on God, but which God in acting looks to as an exemplar or which he aims at as definite goal. This is only another name for subjecting God to the dominion of destiny....."¹ Spinoza's view of necessary creation does not mean any compulsion on, or acceptance of some exemplar to, God, but only a denial of his volition.

It is in the Appendix to Part I of his *Ethics* that Spinoza examines the teleological view thoroughly. To safeguard against misunderstanding his criticism of teleology and hence of Theology, it is necessary to recall the distinction which Spinoza makes between Religion and Philosophy. He admits both Religion and Philo-

¹ *Ethics*, I Scholium 2 to Prop. 33.

sophy as two distinct spiritual disciplines, but points out that the two attitudes are so different from each other that it is not at all necessary to accept in Philosophy what is accepted in Religion inspite of the fact that the aim of both is the same. Religion is essentially sentimental,¹ uncritical and based on faith, and hence it is not consistency but the capacity to satisfy the religious sentiment that is the mark of validity. As such, even two contradictory doctrines (such as the freedom of the Divine as well as of human will) may be accepted in Religion if they satisfy the religious devotee. This is not so in Philosophy which is necessarily intellectual, critical and based on reason ; here only consistency is the criterion of truth. Hence while teleology may be accepted in Religion it may not be accepted in Philosophy. Spinoza's criticism of Teleology must not be understood as a criticism of Religion as such but of an uncritical confusion of the Religious and the Philosophical attitudes. Spinoza's warning is very explicit.

"I should like to remark here that while we are speaking philosophically we must not use the modes of expression of Theology. For Theology has usually, and not without reason, represented God as a perfect man ; therefore it is quite appropriate in Theology that it should be said that God desires something, that God is affected with weariness at the deeds of the ungodly, and with pleasure at those of the pious. But in Philosophy, where we clearly understand that to apply to God the attributes which make a man perfect is as bad as to want to apply to a man those which make perfect

¹ See Guénon's *Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines* Pp. 121-137.

an elephant or an ass, these and similar words have not place ; and we cannot use them here without thoroughly confusing our conceptions. Therefore speaking philosophically we cannot say that God demands something from someone, or that something wearies or pleases Him, for all these are human attributes, which have no place in God."¹

But, for all the good that this warning does, the confusion between Philosophy and Religion is made more often by Western scholars ; and the reason is that the European mind is essentially sentimental and moralistic,² and hence inherently incapable of appreciating what is beyond morality i.e., spirituality ; only religion can make appeal to the West.

Spinoza's contention against teleology is firstly that the conception is not based on reason but on our emotional reaction, and secondly that it gives rise to other errors and absurdities, and finally that it cannot be reasonably sustained. It ought to be universally admitted, he says that "all men are born ignorant of the causes of things, that all have the desire to seek for what is useful to them and that they are conscious of such desire."³ From this it follows that inasmuch as men are aware of their volitions they consider themselves

1 *Correspondence* XXIII, Pp. 190-191.

2 cf. Guénon—*Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines*, P. 106 "the moral point of view as well as the religious point of view, both essentially imply a certain element of sentimentality which is highly developed among Westerners at the expense of intellectuality." Also P. 41 Pp. 24-26 Guénon points out that true philosophy may be had by purifying religion of its sentimental elements. P. 126.

3 *Ethics*. I, Appendix

free, and inasmuch as their own actions are always purposive, they are wont to understand everything in the light of some purpose. This inherent incapacity to look at things distinterestedly or purely for truth is so deep-rooted that when men are not able to see easily the purpose of some event, they try to imagine "what end would have induced them personally to bring about the given event."¹ What encourages this inveterate habit is that men "find in themselves and outside themselves many means which assist them not a little in their search for what is useful,"² and since they are aware that they found these conveniences and did not make them, they are certain that those things were made for their use. This makes them sentimental towards the ultimate cause of things and unfit for a philosophic composure and impersonal attitude of mind. They begin to imagine the ruler of the universe according as suits their nature, and like to worship God in such a manner that He may love them more than their fellows and may "direct the whole of nature for the satisfaction of their blind cupidity and insatiable avarice."

Spinoza is fundamentally right in trying to trace the origin of religious doctrines to our desires and sentiments. As has already been shown, in religious consciousness, the desire to enjoy (*bhokṛtva*) is not necessarily absent as it has to be in the philosopher, and hence the former's view of God and his relation with Him is necessarily infused with his desires. Religious men want consoling doctrines and hold them as their props at the time of weakness and frustration. But it would be an error to think that Spinoza is here criticising only

1 *Ethics*. I, Appendix.

2 Ibid. Also cf. *Gitā* VII, 20 *kamais tais tair hṛtajñānāḥ*

the religious attitude ; he is here criticising every sentimental approach to nature whether it is religious or not. There are pessimists who are not necessarily religious and who see Nature "red in tooth and claw" and feel that they have been thrown either accidentally or maliciously into a hostile and unkind universe. They point out to us so much of waste and destruction in nature, so many cruel accidents and disorders, so many cases of tragedies and injustice that we are lost for a moment in an impenetrable gloom and see no hope and no ray of light, and feel as if it were a cruel joke or mockery to suggest that there is a benevolent God lording it over the universe. On the other hand, religious zealots make sentimental appeals and say, 'How can this wide world be without a purpose ?' In a world where we see that the most minute details of our needs have been provided for, where we see that provisions for feeding the helpless infant are made long before it is born, in a world where sin is seen to recoil upon the sinner and where the virtuous are happy, can there be no ruler, no purpose ? Would it not be ingratitude to turn blind to all this ? Both these views though apparently opposed to each other are traceable to only one source, namely, our desire for enjoyment. He who does not get enough wails, while he who does not need much is joyous. Both these views being sentimental, are wong and onesided from the point of view of philosophy.

Coming to the doctrine itself, Spinoza points out that it upsets the real order of things. It will be easily conceded that the things immediately produced by God are most perfect, but if teleology is admitted, that is, "if those things which were made immediately by God

enable him to attain his end, then the things which come after, for the sake of which the first were made, are necessarily the most excellent of all.”¹ Thus the most perfect comes to be a means to the less perfect. Again, belief in teleology implies imperfection in God, for “if God acts for an object, he necessarily desires something which he lacks.”² But since the theologians admit nothing prior to God, they have to admit that God lacked something for which he created the universe as a means. Thirdly, the argument from the concurrence of circumstances in the case of an event, Spinoza points out, really makes God the sanctuary of ignorance. One is pressed to explain an event going from one cause to another till one takes refuge in the will of God. This argument is thus based on ignorance rather than on knowledge. Finally, the argument that such a perfect thing as the human body cannot be made mechanically but only by divine skill betrays just our amazement and not any knowledge.

The belief in teleology is responsible for men’s notion of goodness, badness, beauty etc. Being convinced that everything is for his sake, everyman sets up an absolute standard according to his imagination. It is in the light of this standard that men assign praise or blame, sin or merit ; they believe that men are free agents. It is wrong not only to hold that there is any such thing as an absolute goodness or badness etc., but it is also possible to show that the very basis on which men consider their own actions as well as God’s to be purposive is false, namely, the freedom of will. The very fact that men differ widely regarding their judgments

1 *Ethics* I, Appendix.

2 *Ibid.*

of goodness or badness etc. shows that these notions are only relative and not absolute. The belief in the freedom of will, as will be shown later, is only a product of our consciousness of our desires and ignorance of their causes.

VI

The meaning of God's Freedom

The freedom of God interpreted as free volition is thus neither a perfection of God nor is it a necessary hypothesis for the creation of the universe. On the contrary, it is a source of confusion and error. Hence divine freedom must be understood differently ; it should be understood to imply that God is the sole and whole cause ; 'sole' because there is nothing outside him and 'whole' because he does not depend on anything else outside his own nature. Being the whole and sole cause, God is the only free cause; nothing else is free. Being the sole cause He must be regarded as the necessary cause. God's freedom is thus identical with his absoluteness, infinity or indeterminateness. He has no desires; he is free from all imperfection. His very nature is active; not that He is dynamic in the empirical sense, but *active in the sense that He cannot refuse to be the ground of the universe*, because that would imply limitation or determination ; the universe cannot but be in Him. Hence Spinoza says that "it is as impossible for us to conceive God as not active as to conceive him as non-existent."¹ Elsewhere he affirms that "the reason or cause why God or nature exists, and the reason why he acts, are one and the same.....as he does not exist for the sake of an end, so neither does he act for the sake of an end."²

¹ *Ethics* II, Scholium to Prop. 3

² *Ibid* Preface to Part IV.

God is as desireless or free as he is *causa sui* (*svayambhū*). He acts from "free necessity,"¹ because "that thing is called free, which exists solely by the necessity of its own nature and of which the action is determined by itself alone,"² and that thing is necessary whose "non-existence would imply a contradiction"³ God's action is thus both free and necessary. *Freedom and necessity contradict each other as little as immanence and transcendence do in the philosophy of Spinoza*. When it is said that things could not have been produced otherwise or that creation is necessary or all that is possible is actual, it should not be understood that there is any fatality about creation or that there is any limitation of the freedom of God. All that it means is that all the alternatives are exhausted in the absolute infinity of God, and to suggest options only betrays our limited vision. The distinction between the possible and the actual is, as already shown, temporal and empirical and refers only to our finite knowledge and not to the nature of things; it is meaningless in reference to God where everything is eternal.

This conception of purposeless⁴ or free creation is rather disappointing to the Western thinkers. According to them the nature of the world is so complex that it should be either an utterly wretched nonsense or the expression of some unknown and mysterious good. While it is possible to attach some spiritual significance to these two attitudes also, a third view is not quite out of the question. And before the third alternative

1 *Correspondence* LVIII, P. 295.

2 *Ethics* I, Definition 7.

3 *Emendatione* P. 16

4 cf. Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya on the *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā* (L 7) : *na niṣprayojanāyām sṛṣṭāvādarāḥ*.

which is Spinoza's is explained, it will not be out of place here to notice in short the significance of the two attitudes, namely, the world as good, and the world as evil ; both have been preached by prophets like Christ and Buddha respectively. Both the attitudes may be equally spiritual, not in the sense that both are true, but in the sense that both may enable us to reach the spiritual goal. The two views must not be taken as two judgments about the world, but as two types of spiritual disciplines the truth of which is their efficacy. The one essential feature that every spiritual discipline inculcates is freedom from egoity. This freedom is possible either by expanding the ego, i.e., universalising it or by annihilating it. Expansion is possible by making the universal good 'my' good, and annihilation is achieved by renouncing every thing that constitutes the ego. The lover of God considers the divine will alone as good, not his own ; he identifies himself with the universal will which is God's will and is thus able to see only good in the universe, because the universe manifests the will of his Beloved. Thus the goodness of the world is not based on any consideration of pros and cons but simply on the devotee's love for God, the Beloved. It is the nature of love to see only goodness in the beloved ; love is blind and hence the absolute goodness of the Beloved. One may ask : does this blindness to the evil of the world not make the man callous ? Yes, it would make him callous if he saw evil and misery and ignored it ; but if he does not see it, the question does not arise ; a lover of infinite goodness cannot be callous. Similarly freedom from egoity i.e., spirituality, is possible by cultivating the attitude that the world is full of misery ; because then there will

arise in the individual an intense spirit of renunciation, and he will get rid of all attachment or his lower self. Thus both the attitudes can lead us to freedom if rightly understood ; though opposed to each other they take us to the same goal, because they are after all approaches only, and any way of reaching the goal is as good as the other.

The third alternative is that of regarding the world as God's sport or *Līlā*. The world is neither good nor bad but only a divine sport, though not a real sport. The conceptions of *Māyā* and *Līlā* are not exclusive; in Advaitism the terms are interchangeable. It is our contention that Spinoza's attitude also is something of this kind. The man who is drunk deep in the divine mystery comes to possess a kind of unfathomable serenity ; he neither weeps nor laughs but enjoys bliss coolly. In reply to Oldenburg who refers to the contemporary political wars and disorders, Spinoza seems to express the same attitude. "These disorders, however, do not move me to laughter nor even to tears but rather to philosophising, and to the better observation of human nature. I do not think it right for me to laugh at nature, much less to weep over it, when I consider that men like the rest, are only a part of nature, and that I do not know how each part is connected with the whole of it, and how with other parts."¹ The question of the existence of evil does not arise ; because it is the Lord himself who is sporting through everything and everyone. Sport

¹ *Correspondence* XXX, Pp. 205-206. cf. *Ethics*, Appendix to Part I, "the perfection of things is to be reckoned only from their own nature and power ; things are not more or less perfect according as they delight or offend human senses, or according as they are serviceable or repugnant to mankind."

is free play, but for the sake of the play itself there are rules that are obeyed and so it may be called "free-necessity." There are no doubt hits and injuries too, but they form part of the game. Spinoza anticipates the question of evil and says, "To those who ask why God did not create all men that they should be governed only by reason, I give no answer but this : because matter was not lacking to him for the creation of every degree of perfection from highest to lowest, or more strictly, because the laws of his nature are so vast, as to suffice for the production of everything conceivable by an infinite intelligence..."¹ Spinoza's another way of explaining evil is to point out that evil is nothing positive,² that it is wholly traceable to our individual way of judging things, which means that it is subjective and illusory and so it does not indicate any imperfection in God. The mistake that is generally made is that evil is uncritically accepted to be something real at the very outset, then all sorts of theories are spun to adjust it. One who is a little too moralistic and obsessed with sin and evil cannot understand the conception of creation as *Līlā*.³ *One who takes God seriously cannot take evil seriously* ; one will blame one's ignorance rather than God for it. The Spiritual transcends the moral. It must be remembered that *Līlā* does not mean real *Līlā*, and so it is not exclusive of the conception of *Māyā*.

1 *Ethics* I Appendix.

2 *Correspondence* XIX, XXI, LXXVIII.

3 Being impatient of Sri Ram Krishna's view that the world is the *Līlā* of God, a man exclaimed, "But this play of God is our death ?" He said, "Will you please tell me who you are ?" *The Gospel of Sri Ram Krishna*, P. 362.

or illusion. The two can be reconciled in pantheistic systems such as those of Spinoza and Śaṅkara.¹

VII

God as Conscious Cause

God has not created the world with any purpose or design. He is the creator only in the sense that He is the necessary presupposition or ground of the world. The question naturally arises whether God is the conscious cause of the universe. The question is a little ambiguous ; it may either mean whether consciousness is the nature of God or whether God acts as a self-conscious being. As to the first nobody doubts that God is a conscious being, not that consciousness is His attribute but that it is His very Being or nature. The trouble arises when we ask the question whether God is a self-conscious being, because self-consciousness and indeterminateness cannot go together.

Scholars are divided over the above issue. Prof. Wolfson endeavours to show that there is no contradiction between conscious causality and the denial of purpose.² He holds that Spinoza not only believed in the conscious causality of God but even attributed personality¹ to God in a certain sense. "Not only does Spinoza's theory of the attribute of thought and his belief in the unity of nature point to that conclusion but his description of the function of that infinite mode of thinking as producing invariably 'an infinite or most perfect satisfaction' is almost a verbal reproduction of Aristotle's or Maimonide's characterisation of the consciousness of the activity of God."⁴

1 Śaṅkara B. S. B. II, i, 33.

2 Wolfson Vol I, P. 328.

3 Ibid Vol., II, P. 283.

4 Ibid Vol I, P. 329.

On the other hand Martineau holds that Spinoza's God is reduced to "mere blind effectuating power"¹, and it would be foolish to say that He is a spirit; creation is nothing short of "automatic somnambulism."² He argues that since will and intellect do not belong to *Natura Naturans* but to *Natura Naturata*, God cannot be said to be the conscious cause. The conclusion is confirmed,³ according to Martineau, by Spinoza's ethical doctrine that the lover of God is to expect no return inasmuch as God does not love or hate.

There is an element of truth in both the views, and so it is possible to reconcile them. There is a sense in which the world is not a mere manifestation of blind necessity but the effect of a conscious cause. At the same time it is also true that God is not a conscious cause. It has already been pointed out that God as the absolute is not directly the cause of the world of finite things. God in the absolute sense is just a presupposition ; in fact there is no real creation in the absolute sense. So the immediate cause of the universe is God as conceived through the attributes or the immediate modifications thereof. God as qualified by the attributes is conscious like the *Vedāntic* *Īvara*. In this sense conscious causality has to be admitted behind the appearance of the finite things. If, however, by cause we want to understand only the ultimate cause or the absolute, then it will be wrong to regard God as the conscious cause, because the ultimate is absolutely indeterminate and hence cannot be self-conscious. *Self-consciousness has to*

1 Martineau *Types* Vol I P. 389.

2 Ibid, P. 390.

3 Ibid., P. 391.

be ascribed not to the ultimate but to the penultimate reality, and this for reasons that will be shown in the sequel.

It is evident therefore that the absolute cannot be said to have personality. But Wolfson contends that though Spinoza denies personality to God in the sense that God does not behave as a man, yet his God is personal in the sense that we behave ourselves towards God as if He were a person like us.¹ The contention is based on Spinoza's view of man's love of God. Our objection to this contention is that Spinoza's theory of the intellectual love of God must not be regarded² "as a personal relation on the part of man towards God." Spinoza's view is not only that God does not behave like a person but also that the ideal love of God such as the philosopher is expected to have cannot allow him to behave towards Him as if He were a person. In no sense is the absolute personal. If at all, it is the penultimate reality that may, like the Vedāntic Īśvara, be conceived as personal.³

1 Wolfson Vol II, P. 275.

2 Cf., *Ethics* V. Prop. 19.

3 The question of God's personality is considered in the next chapter.

Chapter V ATTRIBUTES

I

Why Are The Attributes Introduced ?

A correct understanding of the doctrine of Attributes depends on a correct view of substance, because this alone is the governing concept of Spinoza's philosophy. Substance is, as already shown, pure, indeterminate, unchangeable, indivisible, absolutely infinite Being. It is not on that account a separate Being but a Being that is immanent in the universe as its very ground or cause. The question is : how does this pure Being give rise to the world of difference ? In other words, is substance self-differentiating or dynamic ?

Substance as indeterminate Being cannot be said to be self-differentiating or dynamic ; because that would mean that it has in it the seeds of difference, and this would evidently militate against the conception of substance as pure Being. Self-determination implies negation also, and substance is free from all kinds of negation ; *substance as such therefore cannot be active, "for being, considered merely as being, does not affect us as substance. Wherefore it must be explained by some attribute which is recognised only by reason."*¹ Absolute Being is, as Vedānta would put it, *avyavahārya*, beyond all name and form, beyond all determination. How is the world of change to be explained then ?

It is at this point that Spinoza's philosophy is said to be most defective. It is urged that Spinoza is not

¹ *Cogitata Metaphysica*, I, 3.

consistent in developing all ideas "from the idea which represents the origin and source of the whole of nature ;"¹ because it is not possible to deduce the whole of nature from the idea of pure Being. Spinoza's substance is conceived as the negation of all difference, and hence it is not possible to retrace our steps from substance to the world ; indeed, substance is "the end rather than the beginning of knowledge."² Spinoza seems to be, it is said, aware of this difficulty, and this is why he hastens to introduce the doctrine of Attributes which makes the abstract unity of substance a concrete unity capable of self-differentiation. "It is easier to discern the motive than to undersand the logic of this transformation. Had Spinoza not refused to be led by his own logic, his system would have ended where it began. Philosophy along with other things, comes to an end in a principle which reduces all thought and being to nothingness."³ The doctrine of Attributes thus seems to be born of an expediency and sits loose on Spinoza's conception of substance.⁴ *The attributes are not deduced but introduced.* Either the attributes must be taken seriously and the pure unity of substance excluding all negation be given up or Spinozism must be made to answer the charge of acosmism.⁵

The great merit of the above criticism is that it recognises that Spinoza's conception of substance is that of Pure Being and that pure Being cannot cause the world of multiplicity in the ordinary sense. It is really

1 *Emendatione*, P. 13.

2 Caird, P. 131.

3 *Ibid.*, P. 144.

4 Joachim, *Study*, P. 104.

5 Hegel's *History of Philosophy* Vol. III, P. 281.

not possible to reach the many from the one if the latter is arrived at only by a négation of the former. If unity and difference were mutually related then passage from the one to the other would no doubt be possible. But, as already shown, if they are conceived as necessarily related, they cannot be distinguished. *A reciprocal relation between the determinate and the indeterminate is impossible since the two cannot be had simultaneously : the one excludes the other.* This difficulty need not compel us to change our conception of the Absolute ; it should rather urge us on to analyse the anxiety why we want to derive the phenomena from the Unconditioned. Our fear is, if we analyse it, that if the many is not derived from the Absolute, it (the many) would become unreal. Why should one be afraid of this consequence ? The western thinkers uncritically take for granted the reality of appearance and then try to find a place for it in the bosom of the Absolute. But the Advaitins point out that if the world of plurality cannot be consistently harmonised with the concept of the Absolute, it should be relegated to illusion. The theory of *Vivartavāda* which is intended to explain change and multiplicity really means that *there is no creation and no dissolution ; the perception of change is illusory. Thus in a very real sense the concept of the absolute is both the end and the beginning of all philosophy.* It is only for the sake of establishing this concept that all other questions are raised. Acosmism is therefore not a term of abuse for an absolutist ; for he is not interested in *explaining* the cosmos. Our anxiety should be not why Spinoza does not derive the conditioned from the *Unconditioned* but why does he bother about it at all ? It would be more logical to ask that if change is illusory, why does Spinoza bring in the doctrine

of attributes to explain it ? In other words, what is the place of cosmology in an absolutism ?

It is not possible to get an explicit answer to this question in Spinoza's writings, but the Vedānta does give an answer. The reason why it becomes necessary to indulge in cosmological speculations—in spite of the fact that creation is illusory—is that it is indispensable to show the dependence of the conditioned on the unconditioned. Otherwise, the mere affirmation of the Absolute as the negation of the conditioned may mean only exclusion, as it is in the case of any two objects such as the air and the earth. Though the air and the earth exclude each other, one does not militate against the existence of the other ; both can exist side by side and independently of each other. If this were the kind of negation obtaining between the Absolute and appearance, then both would become real, and the knowledge of the Absolute would not mean the realisation of the falsity of the appearance and the spiritual ideal would become impossible.¹ In fact the absolute itself would no longer remain absolute but only relative. Hence it is necessary to show the dependence of the phenomena on the absolute. Unless the world is shown to be dependent, it cannot be rejected, its *dependence itself is its illusoriness* ; the dependent cannot be the real which is absolutely independent. This is why the Brahma-Sūtras (II, i) discuss the question of creation elaborately just to show that the universe cannot be the effect of anything else except Brahman. But this dependence of the universe on Brahman serves only

¹ Śaṅkara B. S. B. II, i. 14. Ubhaya-satyatāyām hi katham ekaṭva-jñānena nānātva-jñānam apanudyata.

the purpose of showing that the universe is unreal or just an appearance or *vivarta*, because as already shown, change can be understood only as *vivarta* and not as real transformation.

The significance of cosmology in Absolutism is thus to establish the non-duality of reality by indicating the dependence of the empirical world.¹ This is why the Advaitins take cosmology, as symbolic, *upacāra*, and freely explain the universe in ever so many ways, always taking care that the Absoluteness of Brahman is not tampered with. The dependence of the world on the Absolute can be viewed in many ways, and Spinoza's may be one of those ways.

The Vedāntic solution of the problem of one and many may be considered here as suggesting a way of reconciling the apparent inconsistencies in Spinoza. The Vedāntic position is that Brahman causes the world, not as Brahman or the absolute but as *Īśvara* i.e., Brahman as modified by an *Upādhi*. The *Upādhi* of *Īśvara* is *māyā* and it is by virtue of this that He is creative and self-differentiating. It is evident that both the Vedāntins and the Hegelians realise the need of somehow having a self-differentiating principle but there is this difference. The latter because of their predilection for the empirical want to conceive the Absolute itself as self-differentiating, while the Vedāntins hold that the ultimate reality must be understood as pure unity, and

¹ Vedānta Paribhāṣā ch. VIII. na hi sṛṣṭi-vākyaṇām sṛṣṭau tāt-paryam, kintu advaye Brahmanyeva. Also, Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya on the Māṇḍūkya Kārikā I, 7. mumukṣūnām āryāṇām na niṣprayanāyām sṛṣṭāvādaraḥ. Again, na tu paramārtha cintakānām sṛṣṭāvdāraḥ.

it is only at a lower stage that difference should be introduced ; not the ultimate but the *penultimate* should be regarded as self-creating. In this, the Vedāntins, rather than the Hegelians, are right because in the last resort it is not possible to harmonise identity and difference in the Absolute and if the two seem to be there in *vara*, it is because He is not the ultimate reality.

Spinoza in so far as he refrains from introducing difference in the Absolute is in fundamental agreement with the Vedānta. It is true he does not explicitly give us any theory like the Māyāvāda for the explanation of multiplicity as Vedānta does, still there is in Spinozism a strong hint to lead us in the direction of Māyāvāda. His conception of Attributes along with his view that all determination is negation gives us the necessary hint. The essence of Māyāvāda, as will be shown presently, is that change and multiplicity are illusory and subjective ; they are only superimposed on unchanging Brahman. For Spinoza the world is a manifestation of Thought and Extension, and these are *attributes and not effects of substance*, attributes which the intellect perceives as constituting the essence of substance. The attributes as superimposed on substance are only subjective and hence illusory. Further, Spinoza explicitly asserts that 'time' is only an aid to the imagination, which means that change without which time is unthinkable is not inherent in reality. Again, there is his all important assertion that all determination is negation. Considering all this it may be said that the doctrine of attributes corresponds closely to the doctrine of Māyā and hence the logic of the former must be the same as the logic of latter. But since there is a controversy regarding Spinoza's doctrine of attributes, and since the subjective inter

pretation is rarely admitted with all its implications, it is necessary to present the view of attributes taken here.

II

The Doctrine of Attributes

To all appearance it seems superfluous to introduce the doctrine of Attributes when once it has been declared that substance is self-conceived. But really speaking, it is just for that reason that the doctrine of attributes becomes necessary. Since the intellect cannot see the self-conceived as such, it must perceive it through some essence ; it attributes essences to substance, that is, perceives substance which is unique and self-evident only as constituted of certain essences. This is why Spinoza is too cautious to omit the expression "the intellect perceives" anywhere in his writings ; nay, he explicitly says that intellect "attributes such and such nature to substance."¹ But leaving aside for the time being Spinoza's own statements and utterances, it is possible to derive logically everything regarding attributes if the concept of substance as absolutely indeterminate is constantly kept in view ; because that is the pivot of Spinoza's philosophy.

Firstly, it is evident that since substance is absolutely indeterminate, the attributes cannot be found in it but can only be ascribed to it ; i.e., the attributes must be subjectively superimposed. For the same reason the attributes cannot be of the same status as the substance. Again, since there is nothing determinate in substance, it can lend itself to infinite determination. *It is only determinateness that resists further determination ; for*

¹ Correspondence IX P. 108.

example, a cow cannot be a horse. The indeterminate cannot resist determination, in fact it lends itself freely to be determined in infinite ways. Thus we have an infinite number of determinations or attributes. The attributes are only the different ways of determining or conceiving the self-conceived or the inconceivable. Also, each attribute must be infinite though only relatively so ; infinite because it is supposed to express the essence of infinite substance, and *relatively* infinite because only substance is absolute infinite ; the attributes cannot be absolutely infinite without dethroning substance itself and usurping its place. Again, each attribute must be exclusive of the rest since each is independently conceived to express the essence of substance. Moreover, since each is equally infinite, the attributes may be regarded as parallel. Further, since the intellect perceives substance only as determined, it may regard, for all practical purposes, the attributes themselves as substance. This is how all that Spinoza has said about the attributes can be logically derived.

The central problem regarding the Attributes is whether they are products of the intellect or something independent of the intellect. The concept of substance as indeterminate pure Being requires that the attributes must be regarded only as ascriptions. The concept of attribute also implies that there is an element of negation¹ in it, since it is only relatively infinite ; it must be the work of the intellect, which is always relational and whose conceptions necessarily involve an element of negation. Moreover, Spinoza's statements also favour this very interpretation. In his letter to De Vries he

¹ Joachim, *Study* P. 105. Also Latta, *Mind* N. S., VIII, P. 344.

has made his view quite clear. He writes, "I mean the same by attribute, except that it is called attribute with respect to the intellect which *attributes such and such a nature to substance*. You however wish me to explain by means of an example how one and the same thing can be called by two names—First, I say that by the name Israel I mean the third Patriarch, I also mean the same by the name Jacob—Secondly by plane I mean that which reflects all the rays of light without any change ; I mean the same by white except that it is called white in relation to a man who is looking at the plane."¹ Here in the first sentence when he says "I mean the same" it does not mean that by attributes he understands substance, rather, *it means a denial of the suggestion that attributes have any ontological status other than that of substance*; substance and attribute are the same ontologically but different epistemically. The other sentences make it clear that the *ascriptions are not existences*; existence is only one but it is differently perceived. It also implies that the names or the ascriptions leave the unity of the thing untouched. Further, in the proof² of Proposition 32 Part I of the *Ethics* Spinoza makes a distinction between the substance as absolutely infinite and substance as possessing attributes. In proposition 6 Part II he uses the expression "God as he is considered through that attribute." Again in the Scholium to Proposition 7 Part II, he says that the same thing is "comprehended now through one attribute now through another." At many places the expression "God in so far as he is

1 *Correspondence* XI, P. 108.

2 *Ethics* I Prop. 32. 'Not by virtue of his being substance absolutely infinite but by virtue of his possessing an attribute.'

considered through" has been used.¹ The phrase "in so far as" is sometimes objected to² and is said to be a cloak against difficulties, but really speaking it is invariably and deliberately used in order to indicate the subjectivity of the Attributes and also of the modes. As already noted, in the *Cogitata Metaphysica*, it is expressly said that the attributes are "recognised only by reason."³ More explicitly, "all the distinctions that we make in regard to the attributes of God are not real but rational distinction."⁴ There are, no doubt, places where Spinoza appears to be a little unguarded in his expression, but that is excusable; it is only the general trend of thought that should be emphasised. "On the whole the abundance of both literary and material evidence is in favour of the subjective interpretation. This interpretation is in harmony with the place which the attributes occupy in his system."⁵ Erdmann goes so far as to assert⁶ that even if we "could not bring forward a single quotation to prove that Spinoza was conscious of this, I should venture to say that the attributes are predicates which the understanding must attach to substance, not because the latter, but because the former, has this peculiar constitution."

1 cf. *Ethics* I Prop. 21 Proof where the expression "in so far as thought is supposed to be an attribute to God" is used.

2 Caird, P. 166.

3 *Cogitata* I, 3. Also "The affects of being are certain attributes under which we come to understand the essence or existence of every single thing, which attributes, however, are only distinguishable by reason."

4 *Ibid* II, 5.

5 Wolfson Vol. I, 146.

6 *History of Philosophy* Vol. II, Pp. 72-73 footnote.

The attributes may best be understood as the *Upādhis* of substance. An *Upādhi* does not add anything to substance ; it only limits it or determines it in a particular way. The first *Upādhi* of Brahman is *Māyā* which gives rise to all other *Upādhis* such as those of *Nāma* and *Rūpa*, (name and form). Hence *Māyā* is the *Kāraṇa Upādhi* and every thing else is *Kārya Upādhi*. The attributes of Spinoza correspond to the *Kāraṇa Upādhi* while the modes may be called *Kārya Upādhi*. Thought may be said to correspond to *Nāma* and Extension to *Rūpa*. So long as a man is not married, he can be neither a father, nor a father-in-law nor a grand-father nor a brother-in-law, but when he accepts the *Upādhi* of husbandship all other *Upādhis* follow. The man remains the same but attributes are attached to him for the sake of understanding him or his position in society in relation to other individuals. Similarly, *Upādhis* are ascribed to Brahman or substance in order to explain its relation to the world. It may be said that the *Upādhis* in the above example are mere names and not things ; but in the last resort the *Upādhis* of substance also are mere names and not things ; their apparent substantiality is that of the underlying substance.

But when it is said that the attributes are mere predicates ascribed to substance, it must not be understood that they are ascribed by the empirical mind of the individual ; that would be absurd. For if the attributes were empirical ascriptions of the mind, we would be conscious of it, and it should also be possible to see substance as free from the ascriptions, but it is not so. The mind, constituted as it is, cannot but perceive substance either as thinking or as extended. These predicates are universal and necessary and should be regarded as the

a priori forms of the understanding ; they are really of a transcendental origin, which is ignorance. Kant showed only that there are *a priori* factors that stand between us and the knowledge of the noumenon, and hinted that if it were somehow possible to be free from these *a priori* factors or conditions, the unconditioned could be known. He did not visualise any way of having what he called the intellectual intuition of reality ; but the Vedānta points out that the *a priori* conditions of knowledge are born of ignorance and hence freedom from them is possible. It is not only possible but even actual in a sense in some of our experiences. Immediate knowledge of Brahman (*Brahma-sākṣātkāra*) or what Spinoza calls *scientia intuitiva* is attainable. For the present it is only to be noted that the attributes are not of the empirical order of subjectivity but of the transcendental order.

There are no doubt difficulties on the subjective interpretation also, and they have to be reckoned with ; but this interpretation has the merit of making Spinoza consistent. Other interpretations of the doctrine of Attribute create more difficulties than they solve, and succeed only in making Spinozism inconsistent. Before the difficulties on the subjective interpretation are considered it would be worth while to examine the arguments on which the objective interpretation is based.

III

An Examination of the Objective Interpretation of Attributes

"If Spinoza could be interrogated in the language of Kant, he would answer," Pollock imagines, "that he conceives nothing in itself short of substance as a

whole.”¹ The subjective interpretation is, according to Pollock, wholly foreign to Spinoza, because unknowable existence is a contradiction. “Substance consists of attributes and has no reality other than theirs.”² As regards attributes, “The least unsatisfactory word I can suggest is aspect.....”³ Pollock rejects the transcendence of substance on the one hand and the infinity of attributes on the other ; because an acceptance of these may lead us to agnosticism.⁴ The infinity of attributes means only the perfection of substance⁵ ; hence the question of knowing attributes other than the ones we know does not arise. This appears to be a rather facile way of dissolving the difficulties of Spinozism ; one is only afraid that it dissolves a little too much—Spinozism itself together with its problems. The absolutely indeterminate substance of Spinoza disappears, and one is presented with the totality of modes in its stead. Spinoza contends that each attribute expresses substance wholly, but if substance is thought to be nothing more than the attributes then “no one of them can express the whole nature of God or Reality.”⁶ Further, the unity of substance becomes unintelligible ; the order⁷ in the universe cannot be taken to be the unity of substance, because that order itself is unintelligible without an underlying unity. The conception of infinite attributes seems to land Pol-

1 Pollock, P. 166.

2 Ibid., P. 152.

3 Ibid., P. 153.

4 Also Flint *Anti-Theistic Theories*, 6th Edition, P. 372.

5 Pollock, P. 156.

6 Barker, *Mind* XLVII N.S. (1938) P. 283.

7 Ratner takes unity to mean the singleness of order cf. *Spinoza On God*. P. 40.

lock into agnosticism,¹ because he fails to understand it as meaning only the indeterminacy of substance. After all a totality of finites cannot make an absolutely infinite or indeterminate being.

Martineau seems to say in effect : Either one has to be contented with Pollock's realistic view of Spinozism or one has to admit insoluble difficulties in it. His main contention is that there is no way of understanding the attributes in order that the unity of substance may be accepted as real, the infinity of attributes be significant, and the doctrine of parallelism be saved. "If the attributes are separate determining causes, having nothing in common with one another except their copresence in all being, there is no proper unity in the substance to which they belong; for the mere housing of a number of agencies foreign to each other does not constitute it; there cannot be a subject with disparate predicates."² It is just to remove this irremediable flaw that the doctrine of parallelism is said to have been invented.³ "It is mere verbal assertion to insist that the separate attributes are after all the same thing expressed in two ways; close correspondency between two independent series without causality is an unsolved mystery."⁴ What further weakens the doctrine of parallelism is the introduction of infinite attributes. If everything is reflected in thought, the

1 cf. Wolfson:—*Journal of Philosophy* XXIII-P 270 'Unknowability does not mean agnosticism; the idea of an unknowable God is as old as theology.' God is knowable in one sense and unknowable in another. This is in answer to Ratner who quotes (*Ibid.*, p. 125) *Ethics* II Prop 47 to reject the unknowability of God.

2 Martineau, *Study*, P. 183. Also cf. Joachim, *Study*, P. 104.

3 Martineau, *Types*, Vol I P. 306.

4 *Ibid*, Vol I P. 307.

thinking attribute cannot be the associate of extension alone : "this law of parallelism, in the very endeavour to balance our two attributes, destroys their equilibrium and gives an over-whelming preponderance to the thinking attribute."¹ Thus either parallelism is incomplete or it fails to establish the required unity. If the attributes are taken as powers or forces inherent in substance then they may be regarded either as species of one genus or partial expression of one essence. In the former case there can be no correspondence, in the latter no unity. If they are to be understood as different definitions of one and the same substance, then also parallelism is lost.² The term "aspect" suggested by Pollock, though free from many objections, yet "does not clear the relation between the many and the one." It is "not enough for the 'aspects' to have existence in common; 'existence' (in order to satisfy the account of the attributes) must have them in common, i.e., there can be no existence with only one....."³ "By no interpretation therefore, can parallel attributes be brought to lapse in a single Substratum."⁴

Martineau regards the above problems as insoluble, because for him the subjective interpretation is simply out of the question. He criticises Erdmann and points out : "No Pre-Kantian could have put such a construction on Spinoza's language. Indeed the attributes are so far from being treated as figments of human thought that he (Spinoza) makes them the contents and

1 Martineau, *Types*, Vol I P. 307.

2 Martineau, *Study*, P. 196.

3 Ibid P. 187.

4 Ibid P. 187.

measure of real existence itself ; the more reality or being an entity has the more attributes must be ascribed to it.”¹ Further Spinoza uses, Martineau argues, such expressions as “Substances or what is the same thing their attributes” which means that “the attributes are placed not only beyond the intellect, but are actually pronounced to be the same thing with substance, i.e., reality itself.”² Moreover, the term intellect in the definition of ‘Attribute’ does not mean human intellect but infinite intellect ;³ for human intellect perceives only two while there are infinite. attributes

Martineau’s procedure is to show that the subjective interpretation is impossible and the objective view of attributes makes Spinozism appear as riddled with insoluble difficulties. Our defence of Spinozism will consist not in showing that there are no difficulties in the subjective interpretation, but that the subjective interpretation alone can remove the above difficulties and that it alone is correct. It appears that Martineau starts from the outset with a wrong bias. He raises⁴ the question whether the attributes are *in se* or *in alio* and answers that they must be *in se*, because firstly they are not deducible from substance, and secondly Spinoza himself regards them as *per se* and *in se* in his letter⁵ to Oldenburg. What is worse, he thinks that “the substance is no less the cause

1 Martineau, *Study*, P. 184.

2 Martineau, *Types*, Vol I P. 311. Also cf. Wolf. P. A. S. 1926-27 P. 179 where he argues that intellect unlike imagination gives real knowledge and hence attributes conceived by the intellect must be real.

3 Martineau, *Types*, Vol I P. 311.

4 Martineau, *Study*, P. 180.

5 *Correspondence* II, P. 75.

of the attributes (what else does *causa sui* mean ?) than the attribute is the cause of the mode.”¹

It is evident that Martineau takes attributes to be existences, and that in spite of Spinoza’s explicit warning that “although two attributes may be conceived as really distinct, that is to say, one without the assistance of the other, we cannot nevertheless conclude that they constitute two beings or two different substances ; for this is the nature of substance.....”² To raise the question of existence regarding the attributes is absurd ; because it is relevant only in the case of substance or modes. The expression “the substances or what is the same thing, their attributes” does not mean that attributes are existences³, it only means that since the intellect cannot perceive Substance except as attributes, or better, the intellect cannot help perceiving attributes as substances, they may be regarded as substances. In fact, for the intellect, the *attributes* are substances. And it is just because the attributes are taken for substance, that they appear to be self-conceived and self-existent ; the attributes can appear to be constituting the essence of substance only by assuming at least apparent substantiality. The rope-snake cannot appear to be real unless it appears as *given*. Hence if the attributes appear to be *in se* it is because they personate or rather exploit the substance and not because they are existences. It is more absurd to call “attributes” effects ; because that would simply reduce Spinozism to Cartesianism. According to Descartes, Thought and Extension are created substances. Spinoza rejects this view in un-

1 Martineau, *Study*, P. 180.

2 *Ethics* I Scholium to Prop. 10.

mistakable terms when he says that one substance cannot be produced by another.¹

The expressions on which the objection against the subjective interpretation is based may be interpreted otherwise. For example the statement that the more reality a thing possesses the more attributes it has should be taken to mean that the more indeterminate a thing is the more receptive of attributes it is.² Similarly such phrases as "thinking substance" or "corporeal substance" should be regarded only as expressions of our empirical view. The argument that no pre-Kantian would or could put such a construction on Spinoza's language is simply inconclusive ; for it is impossible to sustain the view that the distinction between phenomena and Noumenon was for the first time suggested by Kant in the history of Philosophy. Every absolutism implies this distinction. In fact as Prof. Wolfson demonstrates in a detailed manner, in Jewish Philosophy the problem of essential attributes of God and His simplicity was a matter of regular controversy, and in view of Spinoza's familiarity with this controversy "it is not unreasonable to assume that it is not a mere turn of speech that Spinoza always refers to attribute in subjective terms."³ He has "consciously and advisedly aligned himself with that group of Jewish philosophers who held a subjec-

¹ *Ethics* I, Prop 6.

² cf. *Correspondence* XIV Spinoza replies to Schuller that the axiom that "the more being a thing has the more attributes belong to it is formed" from the idea which we have of an absolutely infinite Being ; and not from the fact that there are or may be beings which have three, four or more attributes.

³ Wolfson Vol I, P. 152.

tive theory of attributes."¹ It is true that the term 'intellect' in the definition of attribute does not stand for the human intellect, but that does not mean that the attributes are for that reason not subjective. Moreover, is it not unfair to choose of two alternatives only that which makes Spinoza appear inconsistent ?

It is not so much any conclusive argument as the empirical and ingrained habit of mind that inclines the Western scholars unconsciously, and hence strongly, to the objective interpretation of Spinoza's attributes. As already pointed out, the conception of Pure Being, hardly if ever, appeals to the West. Pure Being is for them pure nothing ; they start with a predilection for the empirical and as such they do not start at all in a real sense ; for philosophy, as already pointed out, starts with a rejection of the empirical.

IV

The Subjective Interpretation of Attributes

The merit of the subjective interpretation of attributes is that it makes Spinozism consistent to the extent possible. Firstly, the unity of substance and its transcendence are kept in tact. The unity of substance is the governing concept of Spinoza's philosophy, and hence it should be emphasised first. Secondly, the doctrine of parallelism becomes intelligible. It is an error to imagine that the doctrine was invented to bring about the unity of two disparate attributes. That would be putting things upside down ; because it is not parallelism that explains the unity of substance but just the other way ; it is the unity of substance that explains parallelism.

1 Wolfson Vol. I, P. 147.

Wolf wonders whether it was invented at all, and says that "Spinoza nowhere speaks of the parallelism of the Attributes, and even if he did it would surely be a gross instance of abusing a metaphor to suppose that he intended any sort of spatial co-extensiveness of the Attributes...."¹ Since each attribute expresses substance wholly and since all belong to it simultaneously, it is but logical that they should be understood as exclusive and parallel. Their parallelism means firstly that they are all of the same status, relative infinities, and secondly, that they are all present simultaneously in substance. All the parallels meet at infinity i.e., in substance. They might be called *centripetal*, were there not the fear that the term might indicate that they are nearer each other near the centre than anywhere else. Only if parallelism is stretched too far, the question whether Thought is wider than Extension arises; otherwise it is, as Wolf puts it, "absurd to try and measure the infinities of different Attributes against each other."²

Finally, the subjective view of Attributes settles the question of the number of Attributes also. It is only when the Attributes are taken objectively that the question as to why we do not know others becomes pertinent and pressing. And since it cannot be satisfactorily answered, it is suggested that the term 'infinite' must not be taken literally. Pollock feels³ that it should mean nothing more than the perfection of substance. When, however, 'infinite' is taken to imply number, it is said that "it is a sheer blunder to translate Spinoza's infinite

¹ P. A. S. 1926-27, P. 189.

² P. A. S. 1926-27, P. 190.

³ Pollock, P. 156.

by innumerable.....By infinite Spinoza means complete or all.....no body could think of describing two attributes as innumerable attributes, but they may well be all the attributes.....He only knew of two Attributes, and as a cautious thinker, he had, of course, to allow for the possibility of other Attributes unknown to man..... He accordingly posited 'infinite or all the attributes,' in the sense of certainly two, possibly more.....there may but there need not be more than two Attributes."¹ The strength of the argument is derived from the expression "if there be such" in Part III Proposition 2 Thus infinite attributes are said to indicate either theoretical cautiousness of Spinoza or the perfection of substance. Ratner goes to the extent of saying that Spinoza's ascribing to God an infinite number was a "wild and fantastic act of imagination."²

This way of defending Spinoza defeats its own purpose because it gives rise to other difficulties. To recognise Thought and Extension alone as Attributes, betrays a failure to understand the absolute infinity and indeterminacy of substance. If the expression "may be more" is taken seriously together with the objective view of Attributes nothing but agnosticism will be the result. Moreover, both Wolf and Pollock seem to ignore certain statements in which Spinoza indicates that 'infinite' means infinite in number. He is emphatic that "an absolutely infinite being must necessarily be defined

¹ P. A. S. 1926-27, Pp. 190-191 Evidently Wolf presumes that substance consists of only two attributes. cf. Joachim, *Study*, P. 41, where he says God subsists of all attributes or (since "all" seems to imply a sum and therefore finiteness) of infinite Attributes.

² Ratner *Spinoza On God*, Pp. 36-37.

as consisting in infinite attributes."¹ In the same Scholium he says that it is "far from an absurdity to ascribe *several* attributes to one substance." The only way then to save Spinozism, from agnosticism on the one hand and the above interpretation of 'infinite' on the other, is to understand the Attributes not as entities but as *subjective ways* in which the Absolute can appear to the mind or as *a priori* forms of the understanding. The infinity of attributes does not mean mere caution or hypothetical 'may be,' but *the absolute indeterminacy of substance*. It does not rule out the conception of number but it does also not imply the numerical countability of Attributes; substance is beyond number. As indeterminate substance cannot but have infinite attributes, *a finite number of attributes will only imply some element of inherent determinateness in substance on account of which further determination becomes impossible*. Since the attributes are not things-in-themselves, but only indications of the conditions of intellect, the question of knowing other attributes does not arise.² There is no contradiction in admitting at once that the attributes are ascriptions of the intellect and also that there are infinite unknown attributes, because the ascription is not made by the empirical mind and so the human mind need not and cannot know all the infinite attributes. In fact, since the infinity of attributes means nothing more than the indeterminateness of substance, there is no question of knowing them. In reply to Schuller, Spinoza says that constituted as we are "the human mind cannot attain to knowledge of any attribute of God except these

1 *Ethics* I Scholium. to Prop. 10.

2 Cf. Caird's criticism, P. 155.

two....."¹ To try to know more would be like measuring one's finitude against the absolute infinity of God.²

The subjective interpretation of attributes implies that all the attributes are of the same status ; but this is sometimes forgotten. Prof. Wolfson, though he accepts the subjective view, seems to forget the above implication when he suggests³ that Extension and Thought "are the successors of matter and form" in Spinoza's philosophy. The suggestion is dangerous, because 'form' is associated with some superiority to matter in traditional thought. In the West only extended and inert substance is taken to mean matter ; but if we take spirit to be that which is immutable, then all that changes must be regarded as matter. And since Thought and Extension both change, both should be regarded as material. In the West since the true conception of pure consciousness is rather unimaginable, mental states are taken to be the type of spiritual consciousness. Change is not taken to be foreign to spirit. Hence mind is not matter in the West.⁴ But in India, both Thought and Extension are regarded as matter ; because both change. In Spinoza too, substance alone should be regarded as pure form since that alone is changeless ; and both Thought and Extension should be regarded as matter i.e., of the same status.

1 *Correspondence* LXIV P. 307.

2 Caird seems to have overlooked this point. cf. P. 155.

3 Wolfson, Vol. I, P. 256.

4 Patrick. *Introduction to Philosophy*, P. 37 "Spirit is nothing different from mind...."

Sometimes the peculiar nature of thought is turned into an argument to show that there is an idealistic touch in Spinoza. It is said that Thought is the widest of all Attributes inasmuch as it knows not only itself but also Extension, and knows not only Extension but is the instrument of knowing other attributes too.¹ Thought comprehends all. Thus it is said that "there are modes of thought which are not the thought-sides of modes of Extension."² This is particularly found to be true of *idea-ideae*³; there is nothing corresponding to it in the modes of Extension. All this, as Pollock puts it, gives the doctrine a kink in the direction of idealism.

Realist interpreters of Spinoza criticise the above turn given to Spinozism. Alexander's rejoinder to Pollock is that exactly the same kind of reflection might with proper changes be applied to Extension, which would then be wider than all the other attributes, and Spinoza might receive a kink in the direction of materialism.⁴ Nay, Alexander goes farther and says that "Thought is not an attribute at all but an empirical or finite mode"⁵, and parallelism is a way of "humouring our propensity to construe things on the pattern of what is most familiar to us, our own selves in which mind is united with a living body."⁶

1 cf. Caird P. 156

2 Joachim *Study*, P. 137.

3 Caird, P. 202.

4 Alexander *Spinoza and Time*, Pp. 51-52.

5 Ibid., P. 37.

6 Ibid., P. 46. Also P. 56.

The question of the preponderance of one Attribute over the other arises because Thought and Extension are not taken as intrinsically or qualitatively infinite. Each attribute is infinite in its own way ; moreover, they are not existences. Hence no comparison is possible. Spinoza is neither a materialist nor an idealist¹ but an absolutist ; both the attributes are mere ascriptions. Hallett is right when he points out² that if Thought were to be supereminent, it would usurp the place of substance itself and Spinozism would be thrown to the wall. Thought belongs to the same level as Extension, and one is so independent of the other that if the modes of the one are, as Pollock suggests, bottled out of existence, the modes of the other will remain unchanged, and substance itself will remain unaffected. To base one's argument on the empirical experience that there are thought-modes corresponding to which there seem to be no extension-modes is to beg the whole question. Does not Spinoza say that it "would be impossible for the human infirmity to follow up the series of the particular mutable things, both on account of their multitude, surpassing all calculation, and on account of the infinitely diverse circumstances surrounding one and the same thing....."?³ The essence of particular mutable things is "not to be gathered from their series or order of existence," but "solely from fixed

1 cf. Martineau *Types* Vol. I, P. 389 where he says that the preponderance of one attribute over the other cannot be treated "as any suffrage in favour of the Materialist or the spiritualist." Still Martineau does not see that all this is because Spinoza is neither a materialist nor a spiritualist but an absolutist.

2 *Aeternitas*, P. 290.

3 *Emendatione*, P. 34.

and eternal things.”¹ This means that parallelism is not based on empirical experience but on the nature of attributes themselves; empirical experience can neither prove nor disprove it. Finally, to point out that Thought has some feature which Extension does not have proves nothing. If Extension does not have anything corresponding to *idea-idear*, Thought also does not have anything corresponding to the three dimensions of Extension or its motion and rest. The intrinsic differences of the one from the other need not be taken as marks of superiority. Thought-modes are presented successively, while Extension modes are all simultaneous, but that does not go against their parallelism. Moreover, the *idea-idear* or self-consciousness does not indicate in any way the range or width of thought. Nor does the capacity of thought to know other attributes indicate its width, but only its peculiarity. To compare thought and extension or any other two Attributes would be nothing short of comparing two incommensurate entities or would be like measuring one infinity against another. Alexander seems to think that we do not have any *a priori* idea of the infinity of Thought as we have of Extension and hence the former is not a real attribute. He fails to see that the very particularity of thought-modes implies an infinite mind even as particular bodies imply infinite extension. Spinoza’s logic is that a finite being *in se* cannot be without the infinite. “Particular thoughts, or this or that thought, are modes which, in a certain *conditioned* manner, express the nature of God. God, therefore possesses the attribute of which the concept is involved in all particular thoughts, which

¹ *Emendationes*, P 34.

latter are conceived thereby.”¹ The Attribute of Thought therefore is not merely a way of humouring the empirical attitude but a logical necessity.

V

Is Eternity an Attribute of God ?

When it is said that the Attributes are only subjective like the *a priori* forms of the understanding, a question naturally suggests itself to us : Is not time also an *a priori* form ? Why did Spinoza not accept time as an Attribute ? Do the objections that apply against time not apply against Extension also or do the arguments that make Extension an Attribute of God not obtain in the case of time ? It is necessary to discuss this question particularly in view of the fact that Time has been exceptionally extolled in modern times.

We have already seen how Spinoza takes note of the difficulties in attributing extension to God. That which is finite and divisible cannot be ascribed to God ; conversely, only the infinite and the indivisible can be an attribute of God. It is therefore necessary to understand the true conception of infinity according to Spinoza. Then the question will be whether it is possible to conceive temporal infinity and whether eternity which is ascribed to God is the same as temporal infinity.

The term infinite, Spinoza tells² us, though expressed negatively, is like “immortal” really affirmative, and as such, it should be grasped directly. But since different kinds of infinity are not carefully distinguished, a confu-

1 *Ethics* II Prop. I Proof

2 *Emendationes*, P. 30.

sion arises regarding its exact meaning. Firstly a distinction between the indefinite and the infinite must be made. The infinite is that which has no limits and the indefinite is that "whose parts we cannot equate with or explain by any number, although we know its maximum and minimum."¹ As regards the infinite itself it is of two kinds; "certain things are infinite in their own nature, and can in no wise be conceived as finite; that some, however, are so in virtue of the cause on which they depend, yet when they are considered abstractly, they can be divided into parts and viewed as finite....."² The former may be called substantial infinity, for substance is infinite by its very nature; the latter may be called modal infinity. Modality is *not a contradiction of infinity for Spinoza*; the infinite modes are infinite because of their cause, and they are modes because they are not self-conceived. In a sense modal infinity also is not true infinity. Only that which cannot be limited by its very nature is infinite. But a thing is limited either by a thing of its own kind or by something different; the one is privation, the other is negation. One part of space is limited by another part and also by something which it is not e.g., by time or thought. Thus what is unlimited by itself but limited by something else may be called infinite of its own kind. "That thing is called finite after its own kind, when it can be limited by another thing of the same nature."³ Hence infinite of its own kind means the limitlessness of something only in its own realm; it is not absolute limitlessness for "of a thing

¹ *Correspondence* XII, P. 116.

² *Ibid.*, P. 121.

³ *Ethics* I Definition II cf. Also *Correspondence* XXXVI P. 224.

infinite only after its kind infinite attributes may be denied, but that which is absolutely infinite.....involves no negation."¹ The infinite after its kind is only relatively infinite but the absolutely infinite is something unique²; substance alone is absolutely infinite. Śaṅkara points out that a thing is infinite either in reference to *deśa* or *kāla* or *vastutva*. Brahman is infinite in reference to all these; being everywhere it is infinite in reference to *deśa* and not being an effect it is infinite in reference to time, and not excluding anything it is infinite *vastu*.

Is it possible to conceive of the infinity of time in any of these ways? Obviously time cannot be absolutely infinite; nor can it be an infinite of its own kind. The reason is that it is independent neither of Thought nor of Extension; it is conceived only in reference to the changes in Thought and Extension. An infinite in order to be an attribute of God must be like thought and extension independent of every other attribute, but time is not; it cannot therefore express an essence of God. Alexander points out that Spinoza could not see that God's activity implied time; because "Bodies for Spinoza are complexes of motion and rest."³ "If therefore motion is to be the infinite mode of God's extension, it must be because time has been slipped into Extension."⁴ Alexander makes it appear as if there could be no motion and rest without there being time

1 *Ethics*, Definition, VI, Explanation.

2 Prof. Wolfson gives the following synonyms of it. (Vol. I, P. 138.) Incomparable, homonymous, indeterminate, incomprehensible ineffable....etc.

3 Alexander, *Spinoza and Time*, P. 35.

5 *Ibid.*, P. 31.

already. He does not show us firstly how time is necessary for change and secondly how it is independent of change.

- There is no doubt that Spinoza attributes Eternity to substance, but it should be noted firstly that Eternity is not an attribute of substance and secondly that it is not temporal infinity. Eternity is "existence itself in so far as it is conceived necessarily to follow solely from the definition of that which is eternal."¹ It is like the essence of a thing beyond time and "cannot be explained by means of continuance or time, though continuance may be conceived without a beginning or end."² Elsewhere he says that in Eternity there is nothing like "when, before or after,"³ It is thus evident that Spinoza's conception of Eternity is not Aristotelian but Platonic. Eternity stands for "permanence, unity, immutability, identity and indivisibility."⁴ The common phrase 'from eternity' is misleading; it may only mean "duration from the beginning of duration." Eternity must be distinguished from duration; the former belongs to substance only, while the latter is known only in the realm of modes.⁵

Duration according to Spinoza is what marks the actual existence of modes. It "is distinguished from the whole existence of an object only by the reason. For, however much of duration you take away from any

1 *Ethics* I Definition VIII

2 cf. Explanation of the above Definition.

3 *Ethics* I Prop. 33, Scholium. 2.

4 Wolfson Vol. I, P. 360.

5 *Cogitata Metaphysica*, cf. the distinction between duration and eternity, "the former without created objects and the latter without God are non-intelligible" II. (i). Also cf. *Correspondence* XII.

thing so much of its existence do you detract from it. In order to determine or measure this we compare this with the duration of these objects which have a fixed and a certain motion, and this *comparison is called time*.....¹ *time is not a mode of things but only a mode of thought* serving to explain duration.....it is conceived as greater or less, as it were composed of parts.....² Time is thus only an aid to imagination³; it is not anything in itself but only relative to duration.

It is evident therefore that temporal infinity in which there is necessarily the distinction of before and after cannot belong to substance.³ Alexander's argument that "Time is not something which happens to extended things" is fallacious if it implies that time is inherent in extension, because time cannot be conceived without change. It is always from some fixed standpoint that change can be known. In substance where there is no distinction of subject and object, there can be no experience of change. In a sense time begins with change and so it may really be said to "happen" to things. In dreamless sleep there is no sense of time; a man waking after days of dreamless sleep cannot know the lapse of time. In substance where there is no change, there can be no time.

VI

Natura Naturans and Íśvara

It has already been pointed out that the Hegelian criticism of Spinoza's conception of substance as pure

¹ *Cogitata* I, 4.

² *Correspondence* XII, P. 119.

³ Cf. *Cogitata Metaphysica* II (1) where Spinoza considers the reasons why people attribute duration to God.

being would be irrelevant if a mediating and active principle is clearly recognised. If such a principle is not admitted, many difficulties will arise. But it is •unfortunate that in Spinoza we have only a faint indication of the need of accepting such a principle. In the Vedānta, however, there is a clear recognition of the concept of *Iśvara* or a dynamic substance. It would therefore be worthwhile to explain in this connection the nature and importance of *Iśvara* together with its correlate *Māyā*. This becomes all the more relevant when it is recalled that Spinoza's view of divine causality, as already noted, is a very near approach to *vivartavāda* or *māyāvāda*.

Substance in itself is immutable and indeterminate ; it is creative or dynamic only as it is considered through some attribute. If confusion is to be avoided, substance in itself must be distinguished from substance as associated with attributes. It is not, however, suggested here that there is ever a point in time when substance in itself comes to be associated with attributes ; the distinction is not temporal but only logical. The relation between substance and attribute is eternal, beginningless ; the distinction is drawn only to suggest that the determinate always presupposes the indeterminate. Substance as determined by attributes presupposes the absolutely indeterminate substance. Nor is it to be imagined that the two are two different entities ; both are one and the same thing and the difference is only epistemic and not ontological, only connotative and not denotative. Although this distinction is necessary, Spinoza does not seem to have made it clear anywhere. There is only one expression which may suggest the distinction, namely, *Natura Naturans*. It is to be

remembered that in the idea of substance there is no reference to its being a cause ; substance is free from all relations. But it is taken as a cause also, and Spinoza tells¹ us that *when God is regarded as free cause, He is called Natura Naturans*. Though unfortunate, yet it is true that Spinoza uses the terms substance, God, Natura, Universe etc., rather loosely and indiscriminately; but this is permissible because in their metaphysical denotation they indicate one and the same thing, the Absolute. As already pointed out, in the Upaniṣads the world of waking life (*Vīrāṭ*) the world of dream (*Hiraṇyagarbha*) and the world of sleep (*Aryakṛta*) are all called Brahman ; and it is also said that the Absolute is beyond all these . Brahman is *catuspāt* (fourfoot). The differences are only the differences of *upādhis* and not in Brahman itself. Hence Spinoza is justified in using different names for the sake of reminding us of the inner identity of all.

The term *Natura Naturans* may be said to mark the distinction between the Absolute in itself and the Absolute considered as free cause. In the Vedānta the Absolute is Brahman and the Absolute as modified by *Māyā* is called *Īśvara*. *Īśvara* is *Māyopabita Brahman*. As already pointed out, Nirguṇa and Saguṇa Brahman are not two different substances but denotatively one and the same thing viewed differently. Their designation as lower and higher Brahman is misleading. *Īśvara* is no doubt *māyopabita* or conditioned by *Māyā*, but this conjunction with *Māyā* does not introduce

¹ *Ethics* I Scholium to Prop. 29 "by *Natura Naturans* we should understand....God in so far as he is considered as a free cause."

any imperfection in Brahman. The reason is that *Māyā* is not an imposition on him from outside ; rather it is his own *Śakti*. He has assumed it freely and so he is not bound by *Māyā* even as the magician is not deluded by his own tricks. What all the conjunction of *Māyā* with Brahman means is that it makes Brahman appear as creative of the universe. *Māyā* is the cosmic principle that gives rise to *name and form* (*nāma rūpa*). The world of plurality issues forth from *Māyā* without necessitating any change in Brahman. This is why *Māyā* is regarded not as *Abhāva* but as *Bhāva-rūpa* (simulating *Bhāva*). This is to say that all change is *vivarta* and not *pariṇāma* i.e., change is illusory or without any root in the substratum which remains ever identical. It may be asked in what sense then is Brahman the cause of change and whether *Māyā* alone cannot be said to create the universe without the sleeping partner, Brahman. Brahman is the cause of creation in the sense that it is the ground or *adhiṣṭhāna* of *Māyā*; *māyā* cannot be there without Brahman or Pure consciousness. *Māyā* is the principle of ignorance, and ignorance can be only in a conscious entity. *Brahman* is the only universal consciousness, hence *Māyā* cannot but have *Brahman* as its *adhiṣṭhāna* or ground. This is why it is said that Brahman is the real cause and *Māyā* in itself is nothing. It is nothing in itself, i.e., not any thing real, only simulating reality (*Bhava-rūpa*) but not reality (*Bhāva*) ; it cannot interfere with the absoluteness of Brahman. If *Māyā* were something real then all the imperfections of the universe would become real and God imperfect. It is an epistemic principle only and is destroyed without residue by knowledge. The principle of *Māyā* is suggested just to enable us to reach and realise the mean-

ing of *vivarta*, really speaking there is no origination and no dissolution, no birth and no death.¹

But this need not minimise the importance of the concept of *Īśvara* in the Vedānta. This concept cannot, be rejected without entailing certain consequences. Sometimes an attempt is made to disregard this concept on the ground that it is either unnecessary or riddled with contradictions. It is necessary therefore to show that it is neither, and that Spinozism will be perfect only when *Natura Naturans* is recognised as corresponding to *Īśvara*.

A. Is the Concept of *Īśvara* Superfluous ?

The concept of *Īśvara* is thought to be superfluous. It is argued that if change is only subjective and illusory, why not admit that it is all due to the individual's illusion and nothing beyond that ? What is the need of introducing the principle of cosmic ignorance ? The upholders of this view do not want to admit a transcendental cosmic *Māyā* besides the individual's ignorance. According to them the whole universe is the individual's dream. There is no need of any other creator like *Īśvara*; *sr̥ṣṭi* is due to *dr̥ṣṭi*.

It is no doubt true that from the ultimate or the *Pāramārthika* standpoint the whole universe is illusory² but that is not the only standpoint recognised in the Vedānta. The distinction between the *Prātibhāsika* and the *Vyāvahārika* cannot be ignored. If the universe were

1 cf. *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā*, II. 32.

2 cf. The *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā* II, 1-15. where an elaborate attempt to show that there is no distinction between *Jāgrat* and *Svapna* states is made.

merely a dream of the individual this dream would surely be very different from the everyday dreams which are realised as false in empirical life. The distinction has to be admitted and it would be wrong to call both of them the individual's dream. The status of the empirical world is not the same as the status of the rope-snake. The reason is that in the case of the rope-snake, the snake disappears as soon as the individual is free from the illusion. This is not so in the case of the Jīvanmukta; even when the illusoriness of the world is realised, the appearance, like the reflection in the mirror, persists. Cancellation of illusion or *Bādha* does not necessarily mean the disappearance of the illusory, but only the realisation of its unreality (*Tucchatā*). If the world were merely a state of the individual's mind it should also disappear like the rope-snake, but it does not. This means that the world is held in and sustained by some consciousness other than the individual's mind. In the last resort the metaphysical or the ontological status of both the rope-snake and the world is the same; still the two are not from the epistemic point of view of the same grade or level. If the rope were of the same grade as the snake, the former could not cancel the latter. If the *Prātibhāsika* as distinct from the *Vyāvahārika* is not admitted, it will not be possible for us to point out a case of illusion as an example. The aspirant will have to proceed utterly on faith without knowing what illusion and its cancellation mean. The concept of the *Prātibhāsika* therefore forms an important link in the process of reaching the Absolute; and it is necessary to hold as an implication that the world is not the content of a particular mind but of a cosmic consciousness that is *Īśvara*.

Secondly, an analysis of the knowledge-situation

also reveals the necessity of presupposing an omniscient being as the *Sākṣī*. When I come to know some object, a book for example, I say that I did not know the book before. I feel that though the book was there I did not know it. I do not feel that all things spring into existence when I know them, because if this were the case, there would be no difference between knowing and not knowing or even between knowledge and things. Hence ignorance of the book before knowledge must be admitted. The question is then how is the ignorance of the book known? On what ground do I feel that the book was there before I knew it? Can it be an inference? Evidently not, because it is not possible to have the universal premise, and every case suggested to illustrate the premise will be a case in question. Any universal proposition about the unknownness of the object will only beg the question. Nor is it sensible to hold that this unknownness is evidenced by perception itself, because, it disappears as soon as perception sets in. This *known unknownness* of the book must therefore be an experience of some consciousness which is other than but related to the empirical ego.¹ Other than it, because of the above difficulties, and related to it because the ego is able to make use of that experience. Again, the consciousness which experiences the unknownness of things must be the universal consciousness, because unknownness is predicable of all things; the ignorance of everything must be known to it. This means that there is a cosmic consciousness to which the unknownness of things is known or which knows everything knowable as unknown. This consciousness is that of

1 cf. Dr. T. R. V. Murti, *Ajñāna*, P. 177.

the *sākṣī* or *Īśvara* who is omnipresent and omniscient. The individual ego is only a limitation or *upādhi* superimposed on *Īśvara* or *sākṣī* who is *sarvāntara*.

Besides these two reasons for admitting *Īśvara*, there are others also. It is for example said that the knowledge of moral commands and prohibitions (*vidhi-niṣedha*) cannot be had except through revelation. Nothing in the nature of things can even remotely suggest as to what we ought to do and what we ought not. There may be difference regarding our answers to these questions, but the consciousness of the distinction is indubitable and universal. Only God or a supernatural being could reveal this distinction. Similarly, in nature there is nothing to suggest the existence of the Noumenon or the Transcendent being. In the last resort, the consciousness of this also has to be traced to revelation. These arguments though valid in themselves may appear to be theological to some people. But the other arguments are sufficiently rational, and are remarkable in contrast to the arguments given by other systems for the existence of God or *Īśvara*. The contrast is that while the Vedāntic arguments point out that *Īśvara* is an element or factor in everyone's experience, other arguments are wholly intellectual in that they do not have any reference to experience. Mere reasoning unaided by experience or revelation may lead us astray.

The concept of *Īśvara* therefore is not redundant ; it fills a logical gap in Advaitism or perhaps in all Absolutisms to the extent a distinction between the *Prātibhāsika* and the *Vyāvahārika* has to be maintained. The distinction between *Īśvara* and Brahman corresponds to the western distinction of God and Godhead. Spinoza does not seem to have realised the importance of

the concept of *Īśvara* or even if he did, he has not made it explicit anywhere. The concept of *Natura-Naturans*, as already suggested, might be said to fill the lacuna, but it has not been emphasised and elaborated.

B. The Personality of *Īśvara*

The attempt to compare *Natura Naturans* with the Vedāntic *Īśvara* might appear to be far fetched. It might be said that the Vedāntic *Īśvara* is conceived as an infinite person and Spinoza is opposed to the ascription of personality to God. Even if he were not opposed, the concept of infinite personality is self-contradictory. Vedānta allows this concept on account of its religious leanings, but Spinoza would not. "A person must be finite or must cease to be personal."¹ A person must be self-conscious, and self-consciousness is impossible without opposition or the consciousness of not-self which implies limitation. On the strength of this logic it is argued that the God of religion is finite² and that an infinite God is impossible.

It is true that Spinoza denied personality to God or the Absolute, but it is also true that he conceived God as the conscious cause of the universe and also ascribed infinite intellect to Him. Spinoza's God also loves and knows, only not in the human way. *If the two statements are to be reconciled, it should only mean that the denial refers to the ultimate and the ascriptions to the penultimate reality.* In this sense we feel that Spinoza would not object to the ascription of personality to God. Perhaps for fear of confusion with Theology he did not say it.

The other objection namely that an infinite person is

1 cf. Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality*, P. 449.

2 Ibid., P. 428.

impossible appears to be formidable. But really it is based on a misunderstanding. The criticism would be valid against that philosophy or religion in which the •Infinite and the finite or the not-self are both real and are set against each other. If the infinite and the finite or the not-self stand on two different levels, that is, if the infinite is taken to be real and the finite or the not-self unreal, there seems to be no reason why the latter should limit the former. The criticism is thus off the mark so far as the Vedānta is concerned. *Īśvara is not an entity beside the finite selves but behind them. He is sarvāntara. The world of finite reality can only bide Him but cannot binder Him.* It is in this sense that the God of religion also may be said to be infinite. The finitude of the worshipper cannot contradict the infinity of the worshipped because the latter is at once transcendent to and immanent in the former. The devotee disowns his finite self and comes to recognise the infinite as his real self. In fact the infinite alone can be worshipped, because that alone can free us from fear and give infinite joy. Worship need not imply ultimate duality of the finite and the infinite ; this duality even in religion is only initial and not ultimate.

As to the remark that God cannot be personal because a person must be finite, it appears to be a *petitio principii*. If personality is necessarily associated with finitude, then of course, God must be either finite or must cease to be personal. Bradley's argument is that self-consciousness, or a consciousness which can say 'I', must be finite, because self-consciousness is not possible without the consciousness of an opposition to a not-self. The presence of a not-self is a limiting factor, and hence a self-conscious God must be limited.

It is no doubt true that the Absolute as indeterminate cannot be self-consciousness and it is also true that there cannot be self-consciousness without somekind of duality or opposition. But the problem is *whether the consciousness of a non-self necessarily means an imperfection*. Vedāntism at least does not subscribe to that. What is imperfection is *not the mere consciousness of a non-self but one's identification with it, i.e., ignorance of the self*. It is on account of this identification that one attributes all the imperfections to the self, which really belong to the non-self. The mere presence of the non-self cannot bind us; because if it were so, nobody could be free until the whole world were free or dissolved, but this is not so. We do have instances of free men even in this life and the Vedānta, unlike Christianity and other semitic religions, holds that freedom from bondage is possible even in the present life. Our freedom is not something which begins at a particular point of time, it is already there awaiting to be realised. The Vedāntic conception of the *Jivan-mukta* is that even though the individual has his body, and lives and behaves like anyone of us, he is not bound by it, i.e., is free from the desires arising from the identification of the self with the not-self or matter. He has realised the true nature of his self, its infinity and freedom. It is not the body or the mind that constitutes our imperfection, but egoity or consciousness of difference which is born of our identification with the body or the mind, that constitutes real imperfection. In the west, no distinction is made between individuality and personality, and what is worse, individuality which is really the source of imperfection is aggrandized as a value and is taken to be real. According to the Vedānta, *personality is possible without individuality or egoity* and hence the conception of the cos-

mic personality or *Īśvara*; "the removal of these limits of finiteness does not involve the removal of any producing conditions of personality which is not compensated for by the self-sufficingness of the Infinite."¹

The Vedāntic *Īśvara* is not a person like ourselves and hence there can be no opposition between man and *Īśvara*. He is the perfect person, free and universal. Hence the Vedānta is at one with every one who denies human imperfections to *Īśvara*; it is not *Īśvara* who resembles man, it is man, who, howsoever little, resembles God; "of the full personality which is possible only for the Infinite, a feeble reflection is given to the finite."² This is because the infinite alone is capable of self-existence, the self-existence which is the necessary characteristic of personality. It is out of ignorance that the finite begins to arrogate to itself personality and self-existence. There can be no conflict between the 'I' of *Īśvara* and that of man or between the true and the false. For Bradley the difficulty is insoluble because he can conceive neither the not-self nor the finite ego as false. His is a case of falling in love with the very thing which is the source of all difficulty. *Moha* binds us just to that which burns us. Neither the objects nor the ego which is a product of false identification can limit *Īśvara*, because both are false. *Īśvara* permeates the universe but is not bound by it. He has created the universe out of His *Māyā* of which he is the Lord. The concept of *Īśvara* is neither superfluous nor self-contradictory, and it is unfortunate that it is not explicitly recognised by

1 Lotze *Microcosmus*, Vol. II P. 684.

2 Ibid., P. 685.

Spinoza. The concept of *Išvara* is the central truth regarding creation. *Išvara* is an indispensable link between the Absolutely indeterminate and the determinate.

CHAPTER VI

MODES

I

Are the Attributes Dynamic ?

We have held that the Absolute as such is not dynamic and that in order to be dynamic or creative it has to be associated with its Attributes; that is to say that Attributes make substance creative. There is no other purpose of introducing the Attributes except that of bringing in a principle of differentiation or a dynamic entity. Although this is so, a controversy regarding the dynamic nature of Attributes has arisen and it would be worthwhile to examine the controversy.

There is a view that holds that since Spinoza rejects transeunt causality and conceives substance as the immanent cause, it is necessary, in order to explain the course of evolution, to hold that the attributes are self-differentiating or dynamic. On the other hand, there are others who think that for Spinoza "every point of view not recognised in mathematics is inadmissible,"¹ and so it is better to speak of reasons rather than of causes in his philosophy. Wolf complains² that all the English expositors of Spinoza share Windleband's view that the Attributes are non-dynamic in character. He points out the reasons advanced in support of the contention that the Attributes are non-dynamic. Firstly, in a number of passages Spinoza is said to have used the phrase 'cause or reason,' and secondly, the illustrations of causal connec-

1 Erdmann, *History of Philosophy*, P. 58.

2 P. A. S. 1926-27, P. 180.

tion given by him are mainly geometrical in character. As to the first argument he urges that there "are plenty of occasions when the strongest believer in dynamic causality may correctly use the phrase 'cause or reason.' After all, the knowledge of any causal relation may function as a reason."¹ The second argument presupposes, according to Wolf, that "the relation between the properties of geometrical figures can by no manner or means be regarded as causal."² He is not prepared to allow the presupposition, and even if it is allowed, the geometrical illustrations must not be taken to represent causality wholly, but only to indicate "the prevalence of necessary law." "Spinoza did not really propose to swamp them (different kinds of causes) all in the logico-mathematical relationship."³

It might appear that the source of the controversy is some lack of definiteness in Spinoza's writings, but really speaking what gives rise to this controversy is the difference of motive in different expositors. The real issue is regarding the status of the finite modes. It is felt that the dynamic conception of Attributes implies that modes are not mere appearances or limitations but real affections, and hence those who are anxious to maintain the reality of finite modes are also anxious to maintain the self-differentiating character of the Attributes. Pollock, Wolf, Ratner and many others are even anxious to show that Spinozism is scientifically upto date and is "in harmony with present-day scientific thought."⁴

1 P. A. S. 1926-27, P. 182.

2 Ibid., P. 183.

3 Ibid., P. 184.

4 Ibid., P. 191. Also cf. Ratner, *Journal of Philosophy* XXIII, P. 124, where he criticises Wolfson for holding that Spinoza

Perhaps the suggestion is to compare Spinozism with the modern theories of evolution. This is, to say the least, a grossly mistaken ambition. If Spinozism is understood as a scientific theory, nothing can prevent it from becoming archaic and antiquated ; science is fast superseding itself. The only way to save Spinozism against the wave of history is to present it as pure philosophy and not as a scientific theory which is ever changing.

The logico-mathematical way of looking at the relation of modes and attributes is interested in showing that the modes are only like figures in space, that is, they are nothing in themselves. Perhaps it is feared that the dynamic nature of the attributes will jeopardize the unchangeable and indeterminate character of substance. On the other hand it is hoped that the conception of the relation of modes and attributes as logico-mathematical not will leave in tact the unchangeability of substance.

It is to be urged here that the hopes and fears of both the views are groundless. The dynamic nature of attributes does not imply the reality either of change or of finite objects. On the one hand, the attributes are themselves subjective and on the other, Spinoza says clearly that substance cannot be divided i.e., all division is illusory ; all determination is merely negation. To keep in tact the immutability of substance it is thus not necessary to hold that there is only logico-mathematical relation between Attributes and mode. At least to explain *vyavahāra* one has to admit change and difference. If substance could not be creative or self-differentiating even in conjunction with its (*upādhis*), the Attributes,

was the last of the medievals and says that Spinoza's theories "cannot be called anything but modern, if not even contemporary."

the very purpose of introducing them would be defeated. Brahman assumes *Māyā* as if It wanted to create. On the one hand the Attributes obscure the indeterminateness of substance, that is, they make it appear as determinate, and, on the other, they give rise to modes. The attributes have thus both the powers (*śaktis*), namely, the power of obscuring (*Āvaraṇa śakti*) and the power of projecting (*Vikṣepa śakti*). If they had only the latter and not the former, or, if they were not *mistaken* as constituting the essence of substance, they would cease to be attributes and would become independent substances ; substance and the world would not be identical and the two would stand face to face. If, however, the attributes had merely the obscuring power and were not creative, there would be no phenomena. Hence both the aspects of the attributes, that is, their relative determinateness and their dynamic nature have to be recognised if the absoluteness of substance is to be kept intact. The attributes are dynamic, but only as conditions (*upādhis*) and not as independent entities. In order therefore to safeguard the permanence and unity of substance it is necessary neither to regard the attributes as non-dynamic nor to replace the causal relation by logico-mathematical relation. Changes in the attributes cannot affect substance which is their ground.

II

The Evolution of Modes

The attributes of substance make it determinate and dynamic but it still remains infinite. The question is how do finite things proceed from God ? Spinoza says, that "that which is finite and has a conditioned existence cannot be produced by the absolute nature of any attri

bute of God."¹ The finite things therefore do not proceed directly from God but indirectly through some intermediaries. These intermediaries are called *infinite modes* and their purpose is to explain individuation. The evolution of the finite modes from the two attributes is neither sudden nor separate; not sudden in the sense that the infinite attributes do not get transformed into finite modes directly or immediately but through intermediaries; not separate in the sense that the modes of different attributes do not issue forth apart from those of the rest but together though independently.

The intermediaries between the Attributes and the finite modes are the *infinite modes*. These modes are of two kinds: the *immediate infinite* modes and the *mediate infinite* modes. The proposition that "every mode which exists both necessarily and as infinite, must necessarily follow either from the absolute nature of some attribute of God, or from an attribute modified by a modification which exists necessarily and as infinite,"² is meant to suggest the above distinction. When Spinoza was asked to give examples he pointed out that *infinite understanding*, and *motion and rest*, are the *immediate infinite modes of Thought and Extension* respectively. The mediate infinite mode is "the face of the whole universe, which although it varies in infinite modes, yet remains always the same."³

1 *Ethics* I Prop. 28 Proof.

2 *Ibid* I Prop. 23.

3 *Correspondence* LXIV, P. 308. Pollock's view (Pp. 187-188) that *idea Dei* is a mediate infinite mode of Thought corresponding to *Facies totius universi* which he considers to be a mediate infinite mode of Extension alone seems to be untenable. As Prof. Wolfson notes (Vol I P.240) Spinoza uses many expressions such as *Idea Dei*, infinite intellect, infinite power of thought etc. which are all synonymous.

The hierarchy of modes which Spinoza introduces seems to bring him very near the emanationists whom he criticises. No less an authority than Prof. Wolfson maintains¹ that the analogy between Spinozism and emanationism is here complete : both speak of things following from God by necessity, both speak of the infinity and eternity of what proceeds directly from the absolute nature of God, both interpose something infinite between God and the modes, and finally, both arrange the emanations in a series of causes and effects. "The only difference between them is that according to the emanationists this series is finite. The gist of both these explanations is that material things and finite things which cannot be conceived to follow directly from God can be conceived to follow indirectly from Him if we only interpose between these material or finite things and God a buffer of intermediate causes."² It may be pointed out here that Spinoza's criticism of emanationism and his acceptance of the above intermediary categories are not inconsistent; because inspite of apparent analogies there remains a fundamental difference between the two. In Spinozism matter is not a product of God but an attribute while in emanationism matter is directly or indirectly the product of God. Spinoza did not object to the conception of intermediaries but to the impossible doctrine of created substances.

The conception of intermediate causes is one which Spinoza shares not only with Emanationism but even with Christian Theism and all absolutisms. The significance of this conception is to indicate

¹ Wolfson vol I, P. 391.

² Ibid P. 391.

some distance between God and the phenomenal world with a view to suggest that the creation of the world does not interfere with the Absoluteness of God.

- From the side of modes, the purpose is to show that the finite objects logically presuppose something relatively infinite and dynamic. This is why this conception is so universal.¹ In the Vedānta the three conceptions are those of Brahman, Īśvara and Hiranyagarbha.² The Hiranyagarbha would correspond to Spinoza's immediate infinite modes ; because it combines in it both *Kriyā-śakti* and *Jñāna śakti* which remind us of Spinoza's *motion-and-rest* and *infinite understanding*. In Christianity itself there is the conception of Trinity. In fact Spinoza himself speaks of the infinite modes as the sons of God in his *Short Treatise*. Caird points out that the conception though self-contradictory indicates that Spinoza felt the logical need of introducing "at a lower stage that element of activity or self-determination which is lacking to the higher ideas of substance and attributes."³ The covert suggestion is that he should have introduced the element of activity in substance itself. But Spinoza's insight was surer and deeper than that of his critics, because he could see that the principle of difference could not be admitted in the concept of the Absolute or the indeterminate ; all determination is negation. The principle of self-differentiation can be introduced consistently only

1 "Every religion and every system of religious philosophy, with but few exceptions, has been in some form Trinitarian." Hunt, *An Essay on Pantheism*, P. 368.

2 The trinity of Brahman, Viṣṇu and Mahēśa should not be recalled here because these symbolise different functions of God rather than stages of evolution or creation.

3 Caird, P. 179.

at a lower stage ; only that which is not the Absolute—the Īśvara in Vedānta, the Logos, the *Natura Naturans* of Spinoza, can be conceived as creative or dynamic. The 'buffer' conceptions between God and the world are thus necessary. But it may be emphasised here again that they are not entities different from God ; they are denotatively one, but connotatively different. Difference there as elsewhere is only epistemic and not ontological. Nor does it mean that God is the remote cause of finite things.¹

III

The Problem of Individuation

Spinoza introduces the 'buffer' conception of infinite modes for the sake of mediating the evolution of finite things from God. But is the problem of individuation solved thereby ? It is held that Spinoza cannot consistently speak of the infinite modes as *causing* the finite. The charge of inconsistency against Spinoza is framed in different ways. Caird objects to the use of the category of causality in relation to the infinite : "in its proper sense causality is not a category which is applicable to the relation of the infinite to the finite....."² The argument is that the causal relation implies either succession or the coexistence of its members in some sense. "In the latter case, it presupposes the existence of things external to, and affecting and being affected by, each other. In the former it is a relation in which the first member is conceived of as passing into the second....."³

1 cf. *Ethics* I, Scholium to Prop. 28.

2 Caird., P. 167. Also Joachim, *Study*, P. 53.

3 Caird., P. 167.

All this cannot be true of the infinite ; it cannot cause the finite without disappearing.

Caird seems to think as if Spinoza were applying an empirical concept to the non-empirical, the infinite. But in fact it is just the other way. For Spinoza cause means condition, and the relation between cause and effect is that of identity, neither succession nor co-existence. This is true as much of the finite as of the infinite. As already shown, even in the empirical realm change is only *vivarta* ; no other conception is intelligible. The difference between finite and finite is as false as that between the finite and the infinite ; everywhere the effect or difference is illusory appearance. A double conception of causality is useless and unintelligible.¹

Prof. Wolfson argues² that if according to Spinoza (*Ethics* I Prop. 3) the effect must be like the cause, how can the finite follow from the infinite ? He feels³ that perhaps Spinoza left it to the reader to guess which out of the different solutions given in the history of philosophy suits his philosophy, or in the event of failure to find whether the problem arises at all in his philosophy.

Prof. Wolfson himself analyses⁴ many ways of explaining individuation, such as the one which affirms the existence of matter co-eternal with God, the one which believes that matter was created by God etc., and rightly sets aside all these as what Spinoza could not accept. He discards also the view which regards the "many" as illusory and says that "Spinoza couples 'affections' with

1 c.f. Martineau *Types*, vol I P. 318. where he suggests that the modes constitute a new kind of causality.

2 Wolfson I, P. 388.

3 Ibid P. 392.

4 Ibid Pp. 393-397.

'substance' as two things existing outside the mind..... unlike the attribute."¹ "The only difference that Spinoza finds between the reality of substance and the reality of modes is that the former is due to the necessity of its own nature whereas the latter is due to the existence of substance."² His own suggestion regarding the solution of the problem is that the relation between the 'one' and the 'many' in Spinoza is only logical and not temporal or spatial ; "the modes are contained in the substance as the conclusion of a syllogism is contained in its premises and as the properties of a triangle are contained in its definition. There is no such thing as the porcession of the finite from the infinite in Spinoza. Infinite substance by its very nature contains within itself immediate infinite modes, and the immediate infinite modes contain within themselves mediate infinite modes, and the mediate infinite modes contain within themselves the infinite number of finite modes which last are arranged as a series of causes and effects."³

It is true that there must be an identity between cause and effect according to Spinoza, but this does not mean that only the infinite can proceed from the infinite. This is true only of the Absolute which is the immediately cause of only the infinite modes. As regards the relative infinite or the immediate mode, it can be said to give rise to finite modes because it is already a mode.⁴

1 Wolfson Vol. I, P. 393.

2 Ibid. P. 393.

3 Ibid. P. 398.

4 cf. Caird Pp. 165-166 where he argues that Spinoza tries to escape the difficulty arising from the proposition that only an infinite thing can follow from an infinite by saying that finite things do not follow from the Absolute nature of God but from the modified

Further the identity of the infinite is left in tact even after the emergence of the finite because causation according to Spinoza is not transformation but illusory appearance ; this is what is meant by the proposition that cause and effect must be identical. The identity between cause and effect is ontological and not attributive, the effect is the appearance of the cause. But the learned Professor is not prepared to admit that the modes are illusory and hence the problem of individuation lurks in his mind, and he solves it by suggesting that the relation between the finite and the infinite is only logical and not spatial and temporal or causal. His interpretation bears the marks of his initial impression that Spinoza was a "hard-headed, clear-minded empiricist and no mystic."¹ This is why the Professor rejects the view that the modes are illusory rather summarily. He is sure that the modes are real though dependent, and he is also sure that the finite cannot proceed from the infinite actually, and so the relation between the two can be only logical. Thus while he seems to see no difficulty in conceiving a logical relation between the finite and the infinite he finds it difficult to see a causal relation.²

We wonder how the logical relation is superior to the causal relation. Is it believed that there is no element of temporality in the logical relation ? If so, it is an error.

nature. This is according to him *petitio principii*, because the real question is : how does the first modification of God arise ? This is, it appears to us, like asking how did the cosmic illusion arise ? An unjust demand indeed ; for one thing, illusion is not a conscious process ; for another it is not a real process ; the fact of illusion is itself illusory in the long run.

1 Wolfson Vol I, P. 74.

2 For a criticism of this view see Hallett, *Mind*, April 1942.

The logical relation itself presupposes that at least one of the relata must be prior. If the relata are invariably and necessarily together they become one piece and there remains no way of distinguishing them. Spinoza seems to show better insight than Wolfson when he emphasises that substance is prior to modes, that is, they are not on the same footing. If they were eternally together they could be known together also ; but it is not so. The logical relation is preferred to the causal relation perhaps because it is feared that a causal relation between the infinite and the finite might affect the infinite. But as already pointed out, the fear is groundless because an effect is only an appearance, not a necessary modification of the cause. The problem of causation is necessarily associated with the question of the ontological status of the effect. The finite and the infinite cannot be had simultaneously; the one is a negation of the other ; the two cannot be on a par. So it is only if the question of the nature and status of modes is settled that the problem of individuation also can be settled.

IV

The Nature of Finite Modes

A mode is, according to Spinoza, "the modification of substance, or that which exists in, and is conceived through, something other than itself." Thus a mode is absolutely dependent¹ both in its essence as well as existence; it is a complete antithesis of substance which is self-existent and self-conceived. The modes are the

* 1 cf. Ratner, *Journal of Philosophy*, XXIII 1926, P. 123. where he contends that a mode is understood through its essence and criticises Höfding for holding that substance makes things intelligible.

modifications of substance and not something over and above substance ; hence it would be better to speak of "modes of substance" rather than "modes and substance." A mode being a complete negation of substance cannot be copresent with it. Substance is not one thing among other things, it is rather the very 'ground of all things. A mode being a particular entity does not negate or exclude only the universal or the infinite but also other particulars. A mode is empirically conditioned by other finite modes and transcendently conditioned by the infinite. Further, that modes are the modifications of substance does not mean that substance has transformed itself into modes or that they are the parts of substance ; because by that expression Spinoza means only the modifications of attributes as can be seen from the *Ethics* I Prop. 25 corollary¹, where he speaks of modes which express the attributes in a fixed and definite manner. The unity of substance is thus left intact.

Infinite number of modes follow from God and they follow necessarily.² This does not mean that God is compelled in any manner ; He creates freely though necessarily.³ Further "God is the efficient cause not only of the existence of things but also of their essence."⁴ He is the cause of all things "in the same sense as he is called the cause of himself."⁵ Also, God is the cause of modes not only in so far as they simply exist but also in so far as they are considered as conditioned for operat-

1 Also cf. *Ethics* I Prop. 28 Proof. Also Prop. 14 Corollary 2.

2 *Ethics* I, Prop. 16.

3 Ibid., Prop. 17.

4 Ibid., Prop. 25.

5 Ibid Scholium to Prop. 25

ing in a particular manner.”¹ But an individual thing “cannot exist or be conditioned to act, unless it be conditioned for existence and action by a cause other than itself, which also is finite, and has a conditioned existence.....and so on to infinity.”² This proposition need not conflict with the one quoted above, “For although each particular thing be conditioned by another particular thing to exist in a given way, yet the force whereby each particular thing perseveres in existing follows from the eternal necessity of God’s nature.”³ The former proposition refers to God’s immanent causality or the stand-point of reason while the latter refers to the empirical view; for things are conceived by us in two ways : “either as existing in relation to a given time and place, or as contained in God and following from the necessity of the divine nature.”⁴

The fact of modes following from the divine nature is not contingent but the modes may be regarded as contingent because their essence does not involve existence.⁵ And although their essence does not involve existence yet they endeavour to persist. “Everything, in so far as it is in itself endeavours to persist in its own being.”⁶ “The endeavour wherewith everything endeavours to persist in its own being is nothing else but the actual essence of the thing in question.”⁷ This endeavour involves “no finite time but an indefinite

1 *Ethics* I, Prop. 29 Proof.

2 *Ibid.*, I Prop. 28.

3 *Ibid.* II Prop. 45 Scholium.

4 *Ibid.*, V Prop. 29 Scholium.

5 *Ibid.* I Prop. 24.

6 *Ibid.*, III Prop. 6.

7 *Ibid.* III Prop. 7.

time."¹ In the Scholium to this proposition, Spinoza explains that this endeavour considered solely in reference to the mind is called will. Later in the fourth part of the *Ethics*² he identifies the *conatus* with power or virtue which leads man to the realisation of his eternity. It is there that the real metaphysical significance of this concept is revealed. It becomes clear that the *conatus* is nothing but the temporal expression of the eternal urge towards infinity ; it is as if we feel impelled towards infinity or to realise our own self. The *conatus* though essentially an urge to attain infinity or eternity takes the form of desires because of mind's passivity or confusion.

V

The Status of the Finite Modes

Spinoza's conception of modes as given above, though in itself quite simple, seems to give rise to some peculiar difficulties in the context of his philosophy. The first difficulty is regarding the ontological status of the modes. On the one hand we are told that the modes are contingent and dependent, that their essence does not involve existence and that they are only unreal in relation to God. On the other hand it is said that they follow from God necessarily and that God is the cause of the modes in the same sense in which He is the cause of Himself. In God essence and existence are identical or necessarily related, how then can the two be unrelated in things or modes that follow from Him ? How can necessary existence be withheld from the modes ? If the question is sufficiently pressed, it may seem that Spinoza would have to admit

¹ *Ethics*, III Prop. 8.

² *Ibid.* IV Prop. 20.

that the *modes are not absolutely unreal*. There are other considerations also that seem to favour this conclusion. As Caird¹ points out, Spinoza consistently or inconsistently appears to admit this in his doctrine of conatus which seems to be the positive element of a mode. His statement that "finite existence involves a partial negation,"² also lends support to the view that the finite is not complete negation.

It seems to us that the above difficulty should not appear as insoluble. Even though the modes follow from God necessarily and even though existence and essence are identical in God, finite things may be contingent because they are not parts or expressions of substance considered absolutely but only of the attributes of substance. The difficulty arises only for those who identify substance with attributes. Again, when Spinoza says that the finite has a tendency to persevere in its own existence and that it involves partial negation,³ he does not mean that the finite as finite has a positive element or is real. What he means is that the finite is not wholly groundless, its ground or condition being the Absolute or the Substance, that is, the finite is not purely imaginary like the barren woman's son. The finite is not wholly conceptual because it is given or presented in experience. In the Vedānta also the finite is regarded as illusory, but it has a positive element in it. When it is said that this is not a snake, what is cancelled is not *thisness* (*Idantā*) but *snakeness*; the *thisness* remains and is known as rope. The finite when bereft

1 Caird, Pp. 172-173.

2 *E/hier* I Scholium I to Prop. 8.

3 cf. Caird's objection p. 171.

of its finitude leaves a positive residue which is identical with substance. In a similar way, we may solve another difficulty that arises in connection with Spinoza's distinction of existing and non-existing individual things. "The ideas of particular things or of modes, that do not exist, must be comprehended in the infinite idea of God, in the same way as the formal essences of particular things or modes are contained in the attributes of God."¹ If all that is possible is actual how can, it may be asked, there be some modes that are non-existing? If God's power of acting is equal to his power of thinking, how can there be modes that are only possible but not actual? How is the existent different from the non-existent if both exist equally in God's mind?

Spinoza rightly points out that the distinction between the existent and the non-existent modes is rather unique, still he tries to explain his point with the help of an example.² Any number of rectangles based on the segments of lines intersecting within a circle can be had, but of these only such rectangles alone involve existence as are actually drawn. The distinction between the merely conceptual and the existent is only relative, the latter enters into our *vyavahāra* while the former does not. The distinction is based on our human or finite standpoint and is not ultimate, because the distinction is not found in God's infinite intellect in which the idea of every thing exists. The infinite intellect like the *Sākṣī* of the Vedānta perceives everything without distinction or discrimination, but the *Antahkarana* or the finite ego chooses and discriminates according to

1 *Ethics* II Prop. 8.

2 *Ibid* II scholium to Prop. 8.

its own needs and standards.¹ Since the distinction between the possible and the actual is only relative or epistemic, it does not seem to correspond to that between the possible and the compossible of Leibniz. The modes are not the monads of Leibniz, certain points of resemblance² notwithstanding. The relation between the finite and the infinite is better conceived by Spinoza than by Leibniz.

There is another point of objection raised by Martineau. He holds that the conatus of things is not proved ; all that is proved is that a thing is not suicidal, but that it positively endeavours to persevere in its own being is not shown.³ Further, it is pointed out that if an essence is competent to nothing but what follows from its nature and if existence does not follow from its essence in the case of a mode, how can the essence or the conatus try for existence ?⁴ As regards the first objection, it may be said that since Spinoza has already said that everything is determined by God to act in a particular manner⁵ and that nothing can render itself undetermined⁶, it need not be proved again that every thing continues to act in a determined way unless interfered with. In a way what Spinoza says in the third part is already proved in the first part of the *Ethics*. The other objection also, it should now be evident, raises a false

1 cf. Dr. T. R. V. Murti, *Ajñāna*, Pp. 175-177.

2 cf. G. Dawes Hicks P. A. S. (N. S.) XVIII for a comparative study of modes and monads. Also R. Latta, *Mind* N. S. VIII

3 Martineau, *Types*, Vol Pp. 339.

4 Ibid, Footnote 3, Pp. 339-340.

5 *Ethics*, I Prop. 29.

6 Ibid., I Prop. 27.

issue; there is not the question of essence operating upon existence or trying for existence. The essence of a thing is the very power whereby it exists in a particular way. The introduction of the duality of essence and existence betrays a failure to grasp the nature of a mode.

Having now considered the nature of mode it ought to be easy for us to say that the modes *as* modes are unreal. Neither their necessary emanation from God nor the presence of conatus in them nor any other characteristic of them implies their reality; mere appearance in time is not reality. Caird takes to another method, characteristic of all Hegelians, to show an irremovable inconsistency involved in the negation of the finite. "Though everything else in the finite world," he says, "is resolved into negation, the negation itself is not so resolved.....and more than that, obviously the mind which perceives and pronounces that it is a dream-world cannot belong to that world."¹...Thus it is an anxious endeavour of the Hegelians to find a place for negation even in the Absolute. But the anxiety betrays a failure to perceive that the denial of a judgment is not itself a judgment.² To say that A is not B only means a denial of the judgment that A is B. Rejection is not assertion but withdrawal. As regards the rejecting consciousness, it is true that it is possible only to the relative and not to the Absolute or the Indeterminate, but the peculiar dynamism of negation is such that in the very process of rejecting or even because of that, the finite mind sheds off its finitude, it ceases to be the finite and becomes more than that. We might even

1 Caird., P. 170.

2 Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, P. 155.

say that negation is not a mediate process or not a process at all. In negation the finite and the infinite seem to meet ; it is as if the latter witnesses the gradual disappearance of the former as in the case of the statements, "That thou art," or "I am Brahman." The finite seems to ascribe infinity to itself in a rather paradoxical way. Really speaking the statements do not indicate the meeting of the finite and the infinite (the two can never meet) but only the defect of the medium through which the idea is expressed. "I am Brahman" appears to be a judgment belonging to the relational order though it is not ; it is indicative of an intuition, a consciousness beyond the judgmental.

There should be no problem with regard to the negating consciousness because it is only relative. The subject is there only so long as the object is there ; along with the dissolution of the object the subject also has to disappear. The ego or the subject is serviceable as an instrument of negation but as soon as its service is over, it is dissolved in the Absolute. It appears as if negation should be out of the negated, but really it is not so when negation is universal. Caird's observation that the negating consciousness is left out of negation is true only in the case of particular negation, and not when negation is universal.

CHAPTER VII

THE HUMAN MIND

I

The General Nature of Man

The objects of the world form a complexity ; they are all mixed and inter-connected. But for our practical purposes we distinguish them and take them as isolated ; abstractions are made, and new combinations are formed. Hence it is not possible to understand the term 'thing' as a fixed unit ; everything while it contains many other things in it is itself a part of another thing. A thing therefore is not what is separate and isolated from other things, but what is finite and can be the object of thought. Spinoza's modes may be understood as things but with one difference. Ordinarily things are distinguished from living beings ; there is no such distinction in Spinoza except for practical purposes. For him every thing finite is a mode, and a mode is a modification of substance as it is considered through its attributes. Since all the attributes are simultaneously present in Substance, all of them will be found in all the modes. And since we know only two attributes all the modes will be characterised by these two only. Thought and Extension, even though apparently exclusive of each other, must belong to all things. As in substance, so in modes, all the attributes are inseparably united, and all things are "though in various grades animate."¹

¹ *Ethics* II, Prop. 13.

This metaphysical position of Spinoza might appear absurd if unduly compared with empirical beliefs. The term 'animate' need not lead us to imagine that everything has vital functions of taking food, growing and decaying. Nor does the proposition that everything has its corresponding idea mean that everything has mind; it only means that everything has its intelligible aspect as well as extension-aspect. It should also be borne in mind that a thing and its idea are not two objects ; we cannot say that thought has extension or that extension has thought. A mode of extension and the idea of that mode "are one and the something though expressed in two ways. For instance, a circle existing in nature, and the idea of a circle existing which is also in God, are one and the same thing displayed through different attributes."¹ If thought and extension were two things, one could act on the other ; but it is not so ; the two are not causally related. Their being one and the same only means their *substantial identity* and not causal reciprocity. Thought modes are caused by thought modes alone, and thus are all linked up. The same is true of extension-modes. This modal causality does not interfere with the divine causality which is immanent ; the two are on two different levels. The series of modal causes and effects is only on the surface of infinity.

From the above general account of modes, it is possible to gather something regarding the general constitution of man. A human being may, for all practical purposes, be taken to be one thing among other things of the world although, he is certainly not a simple

¹ *Ethics* II, Scholium to Prop 7.

thing but a composite thing. This is suggested just to counteract the Christian dogma that man's place in the universe is unique ; from the point of view of God there is no such uniqueness about man. Spinoza asks us to imagine our existence in the universe like that of a worm in the blood.¹ Man cannot be torn off from the rest of nature ; he does not and cannot form a kingdom within the universal kingdom. The whole modal part of his existence—which is not the whole of his existence—is conditioned : on the extension side, his body is determined by other bodies, and on the thought-side every idea is determined by other ideas. The mind is as much a part of nature as the body.² “The being or substance does not appertain to the essence of man—in other words, substance does not constitute the actual being of man.”³ An essence, according to Spinoza, is that “without which the thing, and which itself without the thing, can neither be nor be conceived.”⁴ Naturally, substance, which can exist and be conceived without man, cannot form part of his essence. There is mutual dependence between a thing and its essence but not between a thing and God, and hence even though ‘individual things cannot be and be conceived without God, yet God does not appertain to their essence.’⁵ As regards the essence of man, it “is constituted by certain modifications of the attributes of God.”⁶ It may be pointed out here that Spinoza's view of the relation of a

1 *Correspondence* XXXII, P. Prop 210.

2 *Ibid* XXXII, P. 212.

3 *Ethics* II, Prop. 10.

4 *Ibid* II, Definition 2.

5 *Ibid* II, Scholium to Prop. 10.

6 *Ibid* II, Prop. 10. Corollary.

thing and its essence does not seem to be quite acceptable, because he regards the two as mutually related. One must be independent.

II

The Human Mind and Body

In the West there are generally speaking two or three conceptions of mind prevalent. It is taken to be either a kind of substance having as its function or attribute all that is called mental or it is merely the name of an idea in the Humean sense. Spinoza's conception of mind is totally different from both of these ; it is rather heterodox and so it would not be possible to understand it in terms of any current theory. As already noted, the mind is neither a substance nor a fleeting idea but a mode of Thought as an attribute of Substance. The theory of mind as a substance fails to adhere to the true meaning of substance, and the Humean conception fails to explain how ideas are caused. Spinoza tries to steer clear of both.

"The *first element*," Spinoza says, "which constitutes the actual being of the human mind, is the idea of some *particular* thing *actually* existing."¹ This is only a paraphrase of the general principle that every actually existing object has a corresponding idea. Spinoza makes it clear that this idea called the human mind is always of a particular object and not of an infinite object, otherwise it must always necessarily exist. Secondly, this idea is always of a thing actually existing ; else it would not itself exist. The expression "*first element*" seems to imply that there are other elements too, and these other elements

¹ *Ethics* II, Prop. 11.

are the ideas of other objects. But the element which is the idea of an actually existing thing is the first or the primary part; for, as Spinoza would tell us, the mind knows only that object of which it is an idea directly, others only indirectly. Further that the mind is always an idea of its object also implies that nothing can happen in the object which is not known to the mind, a principle which Spinoza enunciates in the next proposition.¹ But what is the object of which our mind is an idea? Evidently the body; for as Spinoza puts it elsewhere "the first thing that the soul comes to know is the body, the result is that the soul now loves it and becomes united with it."² To begin with, we take ourselves to be the body.

Perhaps the above account of the human mind is not sufficiently intelligible or clear as Spinoza himself seems to be aware. But it would possibly be clearer if the meaning of 'idea' is explained. An idea is "the mental conception which is formed by the mind as a thinking thing."³ Here Spinoza seems to move in a circular way, defining the mind in terms of an idea and an idea in terms of the mind. But this is not so; the above definition only means that an idea is all that is called mental. The implication is twofold. Firstly, the term idea seems to comprehend feeling and will also. If so, the second implication would be that mind is not a capacity or faculty but a fixed mode which is always actual. In Proposition 48 of the second part of the *Ethics*,

1 *Ethics* II, Prop. 12. This does not imply, as Pollock thinks, that our mind must be an accomplished physiologist. Cf. Caird P. 198.

2 *Short Treatise* P. 122.

3 *Ethics* II Definition. III.

Spinoza demonstrates that there is no absolute or free will and says in the Scholium there: "In the same way it is proved that there is in the mind no absolute faculty of understanding, desiring, loving etc. Whence it follows that these and similar *faculties are either entirely fictitious, or are merely abstract or general terms*, such as we are accustomed to put together from particular things. Thus the intellect and the will stand in the same relation to this or that idea, or this or that volition, as 'lapidity' to this or that 'stone', or as man to Peter and Paul,"¹ Hence it is clear that an idea is all that is mental in the usual sense. It may be pointed out that though he appears to be using the term 'idea' in a rather unusually wide sense, Spinoza is employing an expression already made current by Descartes.

Mind is therefore, according to Spinoza, the idea of the body, the two being not two things but one and the same thing considered in two ways. Naturally, there is a certain amount of correspondence, or even identity, between mind and body. This explains the superiority of the human mind as compared to the animal's ; its superiority consists in the superiority of the human body. If the body is complex so also is the corresponding mind or idea; "in proportion as any given body is more fitted than others for doing many actions or receiving many impressions at once, so also is the mind of which it is the object more fitted than others for forming simultaneous perceptions ; and the more the actions of one body depend on itself alone, and the fewer other bodies concur with it in action, the more fitted is the mind

¹ *E' b'iet* II Scholium to Prop. 48.

of which it is the object for distinct comprehensions."¹ Our body is capable of great many impressions and we perceive a great many number of things; consequently our mind is not simple². And if we have but a confused knowledge of our body it is only because it is amenable to great many impressions from outside.³

It has been said above that the idea of the body is the first element of the mind and the ideas of other objects are only secondary. This is because "the ideas, which we have of external bodies, indicate rather the constitution of our own body than the nature of external bodies."⁴ "The idea of every mode, in which the human body is affected by external bodies, must involve the nature of the human body, and also the nature of the external body."⁵ These propositions bring out the difference between two aspects of the idea of a thing, for example, the difference between the idea of Peter as constituting the essence of his mind and the idea of Peter as found in Paul. "The former directly answers to the essence of Peter's own body, and only implies existence so long as Peter exists; the latter indicates rather the disposition of Paul's body than the nature of Peter, and, therefore, while this disposition of Paul's body lasts, Paul's mind will regard Peter as present to itself, even though he no longer exists."⁶ The idea of something absent as if it were present is called image and is made possible by the law of association which

1 *Ethics* II Scholium to Prop. 13.

2 *Ibid* II Prop. 15.

3 *Ibid* II Prop. 16.

4 *Ibid* II, Prop. 16, Corollary 2.

5 *Ibid* II, Prop. 16.

6 *Ibid* II Scholium to Prop. 17.

says, "If the human body has once been affected by two or more bodies at the same time, when the mind afterward imagines any of them, it will straightway remember the others also."¹

The Propositions from 19 to 31 in the second part of the *Ethics* further elucidate the relation of body and mind. The most striking suggestion that Spinoza seems to make here is that if there were no external objects the mind could know neither itself nor its body. The mind cannot come to know the body except "through the ideas of the modifications whereby the body is affected."² Nor can it know itself "except in so far as it perceives the ideas of the modifications of the body."³ Spinoza seems to be quite sound here, because but for objective differences the subject-object difference also could never be made. If there were only one indeterminate continuum ever standing before us, we could never be self-conscious. Hence the knowledge of our body and also of our mind depends upon the ideas of the modifications of the body caused by other objects. But it must not be imagined that the mind has always an *adequate* knowledge of the external bodies⁴ or even of its own body⁵; "the human mind when it perceives things after the common order of nature has not an adequate but only a confused and fragmentary knowledge of itself, its own body and of external bodies."⁶ This is so because our ideas are true only as they have reference to God,⁷ and not otherwise.

1 *Ethics* II Prop. 18.

3 *Ibid* II Prop. 23.

5 *Ibid* Prop. 27.

7 *Ibid* Prop. 32.

2 *Ibid* II Prop. 19.

4 *Ibid* II Prop. 25.

6 *Ibid* Prop. 29 Corollary.

From the above account of the human mind it is evident that Spinoza denies two things : the freedom of will and the interaction of mind and body. The denials are worth examining.

III

The Denial of Free Will

Spinoza explicitly asserts that in the mind there is no such thing as free will, no volition or affirmation and negation save that which an idea inasmuch as it is an idea involves. Intellect and will are one and the same thing. Mind is always a fixed mode of thought and as such it is always determined by other modes of thought.

Freedom of will is maintained either on the basis of our feeling of freedom or as a theological dogma or as a postulate of ethics. If it is shown that the freedom of will cannot be maintained on any of these grounds, Spinoza's position would be strengthened. If we choose to accept experience as the starting point, that is, if our approach were psychological, then the question of truth should not even be raised. None can deny that every one does feel free. It is our experience that even in those states in which we seem to know the better and follow the worse, we feel that we could have refrained from the act. There is no state of mind in which man feels utterly bound or helpless ; even the most deep-rooted habits, nay, even the natural instincts, seem to leave a residue of freedom in us in the last resort. Spinoza is speaking of this empirical experience where he says that "men think themselves free inasmuch as they are conscious of their volitions and desires, and never even dream in their ignorance of the causes which have disposed them to wish and desire."¹ He is right in suggesting that our

¹ *Ethics* Appendix to Part I.

freedom means nothing more than the consciousness of our desires¹ along with our ignotance of their causes. It is in this sense that the child in his cry for milk, the angry man in his desire for revenge, the timid man in his desire for escape, and the drunkard, the delirious and the dreaming men can be said to be free.² If empirical experience, with all the ignorance implicit in it, is taken to be the standard of truth, then this feeling of freedom also must find its due place. But philosophy cannot be satisfied with the empirical ; it has to go deeper and has to examine what can be accepted and what not.

Green seems to support the belief in freedom by arguing that the consciousness of a series of ideas cannot itself be an event in that series. He appears to forget that the acceptance of such a continuous consciousness set against the series of ideas begs the whole question. The question would not arise for one, who like Spinoza, admits only particular ideas as modes of thought and nothing over and above them. Even if such a consciousness be admitted, it is evident that it cannot play a part in the series of ideas of which it is a spectator, and so it cannot serve the purpose of establishing the freedom of will.

Freedom of will is accepted sometimes as a religious dogma in order to solve the problem of responsibility and reward. It is argued that God has freely made a

1 *Ethics* Appendix to Part I. Also Cf. Alexander Shanks, *An Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics*, P. 89. He points out that this consciousness of our desires really proves nothing because howsoever much "we may wish we had done otherwise we can never prove that we really could have done so." The self which says 'I could have done otherwise' is really not the same which failed to do otherwise.

2 *Ethics* III Scholium. to Prop. 2.

gift of freedom to man in order to make righteousness attainable "leaving enough that is determinate for science and enough that is indeterminate for character."¹ Thus while nature is mechanical, man is free. This is the position which Descartes also held. If the view is regarded merely as a religious dogma, Spinoza would not object to it, because religion does not care for consistency, but only for efficacy. Freedom of will, teleology, anthropomorphism etc., are doctrines that may flourish in religion, even if they are riddled with inconsistencies. But if freedom of will is advocated as a philosophical doctrine, then we can only say that the philosopher is suffering from religion. Reason cannot reconcile itself to it though faith can. It is said that God gives a part of His freedom to man. He lets man go. The basic presupposition of the theory that God acts like man is itself questionable. God is free not in the sense that He has volition but in the sense that He is not determined by anything outside. Further, the argument seems to be circular and even a *petitio principii*. God is understood to be on the pattern of man and man himself on the pattern of God. Volition or freedom of will must be proved first in the case of God, before it is assumed in the case of man. Apart from this, is it possible to conceive of two free wills at the same time? Is not one a limitation to the other? Man's freedom, if it is real, must be a limitation to God's freedom.² The suggestion that man is only partly free does not improve the situation. How

1 Martineau, *Types*, vol II P. 279.

2 Cf. Alexander Shanks, *An Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics*, P. 82, He argues that real freedom cannot be squared with real providence and that (P. 93) freedom must cover the whole field or be limited to the ideal realm or realm of thought.

can freedom be determined? A limited freedom is a contradiction in terms; it would be like saying that a thing is at once determinate and indeterminate. To point out that experience shows the existence of many, free wills simultaneously is *petitio principii*.

There is a third way of proving the freedom of will and that is to take it an axiom of morality. "The doctrine of freewill," Pollock says, "is never, so far as I know, maintained on a purely scientific footing. It has always rested, at least in great part, on the supposed necessity of having it as a foundation of moral responsibility."¹ Similarly, Martineau asserts that "Either free will is a fact or moral judgment a delusion."² Kant also took freedom to be a postulate which makes the 'ought' intelligible. 'Thou oughtest because thou canst.' The ethical implications of Spinoza's doctrine will be examined in the sequel and it will be shown that Spinoza's determinism is no obstacle to morality.³ Meanwhile, it may be pointed out that the feeling of 'ought' may be had in dreams also. In that case, as Pollock puts it, "either free will and moral responsibility are not inseparable or that we are morally responsible for all the crimes and follies which the best and the wisest of us.....are liable to commit in dreams."⁴

So far as moral responsibility is concerned, the question is sometimes raised whether morality requires freedom in the metaphysical sense or merely a belief in freedom. The views of Kant and Martineau seem to

¹ Pollock, P. 195.

² Martineau, *Types*, Vol II, P. 41.

³ *infra*. Ch. VIII, Section VII.

⁴ Pollock P. 195.

support freedom merely as an ethical postulate and not as a metaphysical reality. Perhaps Spinoza would not object to¹ this hypothesis so long as it were not allowed to affect our metaphysics. What he is opposing is the metaphysical theory that believes in the freedom of a modal being such as man.

Spinoza takes note of yet another way of proving that will is infinite or wider than intellect. It is argued that it is on the basis of free will that infinite number of things can be affirmed or denied or our judgment kept suspended. The main line of Spinoza's argument is that it is wrong to imagine that denial or affirmation is a fact over and above the perception of an idea, and so the will need not be wider than the intellect. "I admit," he says, "that the will has a wider scope than the understanding if by the understanding be meant only clear and distinct ideas ; but I deny that the will has wider scope than the perceptions and the faculty of forming conceptions....."² Volition is not infinite any more than perception and conception. As regards the suspension of judgments, he says, "I reply by denying that we have a free power of suspending judgments ; for when we say that any one suspends his judgment we merely mean that he sees that he does not perceive the matter in question adequately."³ Spinoza is here right in arguing that if we were free to suspend judgments there could be no illusions. It is

1 Cf. Alexander Shanks, *An Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics*, P.89. He remarks that Kant's ethical arguments represent little advance on Spinoza's position beyond a more precise use of terms. The meaning is the same—namely, that our freedom is a freedom of thought.

2 *Ethics* II Scholium to Prop. 49.

3 *Ibid.*

just because an idea involves in itself an affirmation that we are deceived in illusions and dreams. "I do not suppose that there is any one who would maintain that while he is dreaming he has the free power of suspending his judgment concerning the things in his dreams..... I deny that a man does not in the very act of perception make any affirmation."¹ Suspense indicates the incapacity to see, and not freedom. Spinoza is prepared to admit theoretically that if a man were put in an equilibrium between two temptations like the classical Buridan's ass, he would perish; for he is not able to see clearly; and if he does not perish, it is because the equilibrium is not there, or that clear perception has dawned, and not because he has the freedom to choose.

Spinoza's approach to the problem of free will is metaphysical. Nothing that is a mode can be free. But this does not mean that man is mechanically governed by inert nature. The conception of nature as dead and inert is foreign to Spinoza. A mechanistic view of nature is consistent only with materialism and Spinoza was not a materialist. There are two saving features in his philosophy; firstly, everything is animate, and secondly, an idea is determined only by an idea. Materialism takes nature to be an independent force or system of laws. There is nothing beyond these laws. Even a spiritual religion like Buddhism does not accept anything transcending the rigours of the law. But Spinozism, like Advaitism, accepts the transcendent freedom of substance. Behind every thing there is the will of God. In this sense there is determinism in the Vedānta also. The *Antahkarana* which corresponds to Spinoza's mind

1 *Ethics* II Scholium to Prop. 49.

may be said to be an idea of the body inasmuch as it is organically related to the body and depends on it for its changes and is the source of all mental states. It is not a separate and indeterminate faculty ; *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahankāra* and *citta* all are the modes of it. As regards freedom of will, Vedānta also rejects it. In his commentary on the *Kenopaniṣad* (I, i) Śaṅkara argues¹ that if the *will* were free then all men could avoid the contemplation of evil. But it must be remembered that determinism in Spinoza and the Vedānta is not ultimate but only phenomenal.

IV

The Denial of Interaction

Spinoza rejects the freedom of will. He rejects also any kind of interaction between body and mind. The difficulties, to which interactionism leads, led Berkeley to reject matter and Spinoza to reject interactionism itself. Spinoza was right in thinking that if Thought and Extension are utterly exclusive of each other, interaction could in no way be possible. "Body cannot", he says, "determine mind to think, neither can mind determine body to motion or rest or any state different from these, if such be there."² The order or concatenation of things being one or identical, that is, mind and body not being two things but one and the same thing conceived first under the attribute of thought, secondly under the attribute of extension, there can be no question of interaction.

Does not the theory, it might be asked, go against universal experience ? Do I not lift my hand when I

¹ *Kenopaniṣad* (I, i) commentary "yadi svatantram manah pravṛtti-nivṛtti viṣaye syāt tārhi sarvasya anīṣṭa cintanam na syāt."

² *Ephics* III Prop. 2.

want to ? If not, could there be any art, architecture or any action at all ? In answer, it must be said that in experience we do not see an idea *causing* any movement of the body ; all that we see is the concurrence of the idea and the movement of the body. This is a point well appreciated in occasionalism but is stretched too far. Even if we admit interaction between mind and body its *modus operandi* remains unintelligible. How can what, is extended be united to what is not extended ? Hence Spinoza exclaims, referring to Descartes, "what does he understand, I ask, by the union of the mind and the body ? What clear and distinct conception has to be got of thought in most intimate union with a certain particle of extended matter ?"¹ As regards the movements of the body he says, "none has hitherto laid down the limits to the powers of the body, that is, no one has as yet been taught by experience what the body can accomplish solely by the laws of nature, in so far as she is regarded as extension. No one hitherto has gained such an accurate knowledge of the bodily mechanism that he can explain all its functions ; nor need I call attention to the fact that many actions are observed in the lower animals, which far transcend human sagacity, and that somnambulists do many things in their sleep, which they would not venture to do when they are awake : these instances are enough to show that the body can by the sole laws of its nature do many things which the mind wonders at."² No limits can be set to the powers of the mechanism of the human body that "far surpasses in complexity all that has been put together by human art."

1 *Ethics* Preface to Part V.

2 Ibid III Scholium to Prop. 2.

Spinoza makes fun of those who think that they can control their tongues at will and says that if it were true the world would have been much happier. "Experience abundantly shows that men can govern anything more easily than their tongues."¹ Causal relation between mind and body is inconceivable and unknown.

The utter exclusiveness of mind and body seems to give rise to another difficulty also, namely, the difficulty of knowing the external objects. If the objects can never affect the mind, how are they known? They are known through the modifications of the body, it might be said. But the problem persists; if we know nothing but the modifications of the body how can we say that they (the modifications) belong to an external object? Spinoza seems to be arguing in a circle.² "Before he can assert the correspondence between ideas and extended things, he must know that things which are the ideata of the ideas exist in nature, and yet he knows this only because he assumes that ideas must have ideata corresponding to them."³ Is it not a contradiction to affirm a cognitive relation between things that are wholly independent of each other?⁴ How is the truth or otherwise of an idea known?

The above objection does not seem to be sound and appears to be based on the presupposition that Spinoza believed in the theory of representative perception along with which goes the theory of correspondence. Spinoza does say that the objects affect the body and not the mind, but he does not say that we know *only* the affections of the

¹ *Ethics* III Scholium to Prop. 2.

² Barker, *Mind* XLVII N. S. P. 166.

³ *Ibid* Barker, P. 166.

⁴ *Ibid*, Barker P. 290.

body. Corresponding to the changes in the body there are changes in the mind which are revelatory of objects ; the mind knows objects directly¹ though it is not affected by them. Correspondence between mind and body is accordig to Spinoza not a perceptual fact but a metaphysical theory which asserts that mind and body are one and the same thing. Spinoza's argument is therefore not circular. It would be as absurd to ask how the mind knows or reveals objects, as it would be to enquire how extention extends or has motion or rest. Is not, it may be further asked, knowing the same thing as being modified ? Modification it is, but not of the mind but of the body of which it is an idea, that is, the modification is not direct. It may be said that if mind is not affected by an external body it cannot be affected by its own body also. The answer is that the question of being affected by its own body does not arise; for, both are one and the same thing. To say that the cognitive relation between two absolutely exclusive or independent things is a contradiction, is pointless. Because knowledge is found not between two independent things, but between two bodies interacting mutually. Hence we hold that according to Spinoza external objects are not inferred but known directly. Taylor's objection² as to why the mind knows its own body and not other bodies thus falls to the ground ; the mind cannot be the idea of some other body. The other question as to how the truth of perceptions is known belongs to the theory of truth and will be taken up in the sequel.³

1 Cf. Wolfson, Vol II P. 77. The mind not only understands and imagines but also perceives.

2 *Mind* XLVI N. S. P. 152.

3 Other aspects of the human mind such as passions and emotions have been taken up in the next chapter.

V

The Idea-Ideae

In a general way Spinoza affirms that the idea or knowledge of the human mind is granted in God in much the same way as the idea of the human body.¹ And this idea of the mind he further adds, "is united to the mind in the same way as the mind is united to the body."² In the scholium to this proposition he explains that "the idea of the mind, that is, the idea of an idea, is nothing but the distinctive quality (*forma*) of the idea in so far as it is conceived as a mode of thought without reference to the object; if a man knows anything, he, by that very fact, knows that he knows it, and at the same time he knows that he knows, and so on to infinity." The knowledge of an object is not revealed by another act of knowledge but is *self-evident*. The point is particularly remarkable; for it is well known that there are some thinkers who are of the opinion that knowledge is not self-evident but is known through introspection. This position seems to us to be untenable; knowledge cannot be known through introspection, if it is not already known. How can we even suspect that knowing has taken place if it is not already known? That one knowledge is revealed by another knowledge leads us to a *regress ad infinitum*. Moreover, if knowledge is not known at the time of happening how can it be identified in introspection? So self-evidence will have to be admitted. The object which itself requires to be revealed cannot inform us of knowledge. It is knowledge that reveals both itself and the object. Knowledge, if it is not self-evident,

¹ *Ethics* II Prop. 20.

² *Ibid* Prop. 21.

cannot be known in the next moment when it is not there. Hence Spinoza is right in saying that the idea of the mind and the mind are one and the same thing: "if a man knows any thing, he, by that very fact, knows that he knows." As regards the infinite series of which Spinoza speaks, it may be suggested that it does not conflict with the self-evidence of knowledge, because what Spinoza seems to mean here is that even if one repeats 'I know that I know' numberless times, the fact remains the same i.e., knowledge and the knowledge of knowledge remain one and the same.

A striking comparison between Vedāntism and Spinozism may be noticed here. Brahman according to Vedantism as modified by *Upādhi* (Attribute) gives rise to the world of finite things. Since Brahman who is all-consciousness underlies everything, there is a sense in which the Vedānta may also say that everything is animate. In fact the Vedānta does speak of two kinds of *caitanyas*, the *pramāṇī caitanya* and the *viṣaya caitanya*, the former corresponding to Spinoza's knowing mind and the latter might be said to correspond to the object known. Though every thing is animate, yet only that thing can know or be self-conscious which has the peculiarity of possessing *Antahkaraṇa*. The relation between the *Antahkaraṇa* and the body is almost the same as the relation between the mind and its body in Spinoza, the only difference being that the *Antahkaraṇa* is, unlike the mind, a *jaḍa* or inert entity. But although *jaḍa*, on account of its identity with the self (*Ātmā*), it behaves for all practical purposes like the mind. The *ideas of the mind* can be easily compared to the *vṛttis of the Antahkaraṇa*. They are self-evident like ideas and are also formed according as the body is affected internally and externally.

The *manas* or the *will*, as already noted, which is a *vr̥tti* of the *Antahkaraṇa* is not a separate or independent faculty but a determinate mode. All the *vr̥ttis* are contained in the *sākṣī* even as all the ideas are contained in God. The *sākṣī* is infinite and universal and the *Antahkaraṇa* finite and particular. Even as the mind is a part of the infinite intellect the *Antahkaraṇa* may be said to be a part of the *sākṣī* inasmuch as the former contains only a part of all that the latter knows. It is sometimes asked as to how can the finite mind with all its imperfections be a part of the infinite. It is forgotten that the infinite is not a collection,¹ but a condition of the finite, and it is in this sense alone that the latter is contained in the former.

The comparison of Spinoza's *idea-ideae* with the self-evidence of the *vr̥ttis* of the *Antahkaraṇa* suggests a problem here and that is regarding self-consciousness. It may be asked : Is the mental part of man only a series of self-conscious ideas without any underlying unity or is it possible to take this *idea-ideae* as the principle of self-conscious unity ? Taylor agrees² with Martineau in holding, that this *idea-ideae* does not explain what one means by self-consciousness. It is not, they argue, the man who is said to be aware of himself but his ideas that are conscious of themselves. Caird on the other hand makes³ much of the doctrine and tries to give it a Hegelian twist by interpreting it to be the idea of identity-in-difference or the idea with a "richer content." What kind of self-consciousness is to be found in Spinoza, the Humean or the Hegelian variety ?

1 Barker *Mind* XLVII N. S. P. 179.

2 Taylor *Mind* XLVI N. S. P. 149.

3 Caird P. 202.

When the question of identity and memory is raised, the Vedānta points out that although the *vṛttis* are fleeting yet on account of the continuity of the underlying self, memory and consciousness of continuity etc. are possible. The same might be said by Spinoza ; since there is the underlying unity of substance behind all modes. Also, the idea called the mind is the idea of an organic mode, unlike the ideas of Hume floating in the air without any anchorage. There is no doubt that there exists some confusion¹ in Spinoza's use of the word idea as is noted by some scholars, yet it is possible to understand him. What accounts for self-consciousness is not the self-conscious *vṛtti* or the *idea-ideae* but the underlying unity of the Absolute. The *idea-ideae* is only a form of that. This *idea-ideae* is not an idea beside other ideas, it is only the consciousness of the different ideas. So *Idea-ideae* is not a richer content, as Caird would like to take it to be ; the content is in no way enriched in self-consciousness.

VI

The Doctrine of Truth and Falsity

In the first part of the *Ethics* Spinoza states it as an axiom that "a true idea must correspond with its ideate or object."² From this it might appear that he believed in something like the correspondence-theory of truth. But in the same part he accepts an idea which, he says, is self-conceived, is distinct and clear. Later on also he says that an idea involves³ its affirmation in itself and an extra

1 Cf. Barker *Mind* XLVII N. S. P. 295.

2 *Ethics* I Axiom, 6.

3 Ibid II Scholium to Prop. 49.

faculty like the will is not required to assert or deny it. In fact in the *Cogitata Metaphysica* he seems to ridicule the theory when he says that to say that a true idea represents a thing as it is in itself means "as if we thought that gold which we perceive might tell us what was in itself or what is not."¹ By implication it means that *correspondence on which the truth of an idea is said to be based itself needs evidence*. In the same way the Coherence-theory also which makes truth dependent on the coherence of an idea with other ideas is equally defective, because the truth of coherence itself will be either accepted as self-evident or one will be led to a *regress ad infinitum*. The mistake that is committed by the former view is that an idea is taken to be "something lifeless like a picture on a panel." and not as a mode of thinking which involves affirmation or negation. An idea in this sense must be having something intrinsic in it which makes it true, "he who has a true idea simultaneously knows that he has a true idea."² The other theory makes the mistake of not accepting any idea as true in itself.

Thus Spinoza does not seem to believe in the correspondence theory inasmuch as he does not accept the *representative-theory* of perception. Nor does he accept the Coherence theory.³ However, he does seem to accept some extrinsic marks of truth also beside the intrinsic ones. This is evident from his definition of adequate idea which he distinguishes from true ideas. "By an adequate idea, I

1 *Cogitata* PP. 132-33.

2 *Ethics* II Prop. 43.

3 Cf. S. Hampshire. *Spinoza*, P. 101 and also Pp. 117-119. Where it has been argued that Spinoza believed in the coherence theory of truth and also that it is essential for his metaphysics.

mean an idea, which in so far as it is considered in itself, without relation to the object, has all the properties or intrinsic marks of a true idea. I say *intrinsic* in order to exclude that mark which is extrinsic, namely, the agreement between the idea and its object."¹ Elsewhere he says,² "I recognise no other difference between a true and an adequate idea than that the word true refers only to the agreement of the idea with its ideatum, while the word adequate refers to the nature of the idea in itself, so that there is really no difference between a true and an adequate idea except this extrinsic relation." What are, it might be asked, the intrinsic marks of truth or adequate ideas? They are clarity and distinctness and certitude beyond all doubt.³ It would seem that it is all subjective, but the point is that this cannot be helped; because by the very nature of the case truth cannot have an extrinsic or objective criterion which does not ultimately itself depend upon the intrinsic criterion. Hence really speaking the intrinsic marks alone can be accepted as the true marks of truth. In the *Emendationes* he says that it is "certain that a true idea is distinguished from a false one, not so much by its extrinsic object as by its intrinsic nature."⁴

There is a very strong case made for the intrinsic criterion of truth in the *Short Treatise* where Spinoza says, "the very clearest things give knowledge of themselves and also of falsehood in such a manner that it would be great folly to ask how we would be conscious of them,

¹ *Ethics* II Definition IV and Explanation.

² *Correspondence* LX P. 300.

³ *Cogitata* P. 133.

⁴ *Emendationes* P. 23.

for since we have called them the clearest things there cannot be any other clearness through which they would be illumined. Hence it follows that truth reveals itself and falsehood as well, for *truth is made clear by truth*, i.e., by itself, just as falsehood is also made clear by it, but *falsehood never reveals nor explains itself*. So anyone who has the truth cannot doubt that he has it, but he who remains in falsehood or error may well imagine that he has the truth, just as when a person dreams he may easily imagine that he is awake, but when he is awake he can never think that he is dreaming."¹ Passages of the same kind may be quoted from the *Ethics*, the *Cogitata Metaphysica*, and the *Emendatione*.² The point to be noted is that according to Spinoza *while truth is self-evident, falsity is not*. In this connection it seems necessary to bring out Spinoza's conception of falsity also. "Falsity consists in the privation of knowledge which inadequate, fragmentary, or confused ideas involve."³ But mere ignorance is not falsity though it is the cause of the latter: "falsity cannot consist in simple privation (for minds, not bodies, are said to be mistaken), neither can it consist in absolute ignorance, for ignorance and error are not identical."⁴ Falsity consists in *mis-taking* things, even our "imagination regarded in themselves do not involve error."⁵ Mistake takes place on

1 *Short Treatise* pp. 99-100.

2 *Emendatione* P. 11, Truth needs no sign. Also, P. 14, Truth is self-evident.

Cf. Also *Ethics* II Prop. 43. Also Scholium, 'Truth is its own standard.'

3 *Ethics* II Prop. 34.

4 *Ibid* Proof.

5 *Ibid* II Scholium. to Prop. 49.

account of ignorance, and hence it can be removed only by knowledge, that is, an error cannot be self-evident.

It is significant that the Vedānta also holds the same view of truth and falsity. There are other schools that differ from the Vedānta. One view, for example, is that truth and falsity both require to be established, another view says that both truth and falsity are self-evident, a third suggestion is that while falsity is self-evident, truth requires to be established. Vedānta¹ affirms its view after giving very cogent criticisms of these three views. If truth and falsity are both self-evident then there can be no error or mistaking one for the other, but our experience is that the rope-snake which is false is mistaken to be real. If, however, truth and falsity both require to be established, ie., if truth is not self-evident then what establishes truth will also be required to be established and so on *ad infinitum*. Both the criticisms apply to the third theory which says that falsity is self-evident and truth is dependent on evidence. The conclusion therefore is that truth cannot be proved and falsity cannot be self-evident; otherwise, in one case there will be infinite regress and in the other case the very possibility of error is eliminated. Hence it is held that truth is self-evident and falsity is to be proved. In perception, when we see something we *naturally* believe it; we do not wait to prove its truth. And even when there is some doubt regarding the validity of the perception, it is just because there is incipient belief; doubt without some belief is quite unintelligible. It is just because of this element of belief in the validity of perception that we are surprised to discover the rope in the place of the

¹ Cf. *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* Ch. VII.

snake. This spontaneous belief in the validity of perception cannot be accounted for except by the nature of truth as self-evident, and it is this that makes illusion possible ; the false appears as true i.e., as self-evident and we are taken in ; if the false declared itself as it appeared, nobody would be duped, nobody would be disappointed. Hence Spinoza is right in holding that while truth is self-evident, falsity is not, even though he has not given the above arguments. He further agrees with the Vedānta in holding that "God is truth or the truth is God himself". Ultimately substance alone is self-conceived or self-evident.

The question now is ; if truth is self-evident, does every one know it equally, and if not, why ? The answer is that everyone does know the truth otherwise one could never know it, but the trouble is that there are certain hindrances on account of which that knowledge is not efficacious. The opponent suggests¹ the difficulty that if Brahman is known, no effort should be made to know it; and if it is unknown there can be no curiosity to know it. Śāṅkara replies that though Brahman is known to us as existing, it is not known as it is, and there are differences of opinion about it also ; hence the inquiry is not futile. Spinoza too says "that the infinite essence of God and his eternity are known to all,"² still we have to make further investigation so that we may "form that third kind of knowledge" which is called intuition.

VII

Grades of Knowledge

Spinoza speaks of three grades of knowledge ; but it should be noted at the outset that these grades have

1 B. S. B. I, i. l.

2 *Ethics* II Scholium to Prop. 47.

nothing to do with the modern theory of degrees of truth. The fundamental difference between the two is that while Spinoza's view refers to different levels of consciousness of which the higher supersedes the lower, in the latter nothing is completely superseded. If at all, Spinoza's view may be compared either with the Neo-Platonic theory or with the Vedāntic theory of the grades of knowledge.

A. Imagination

It has already been pointed out that every philosophy worth the name begins with some kind of disillusionment or at least a suspicion against natural values and natural knowledge, and whatever else may be its conclusions regarding other things, it replaces the natural view of things by a considered view of them. The first view of things prevails only so long as the sense of scrutiny or criticism has not arisen, and when it does arise it is found that the natural view is merely based on certain practical considerations only, and not on any valid evidence. It is a kind of animal faith. As such, Spinoza calls¹ the first view of things imagination and rightly so; in the Vedānta the same thing is called *vyāvahārika* knowledge or view justified by empirical considerations only and not by reason.

Mind itself is not committed to the view of imagination ; in itself it is capable of seeing things in their right perspective, seeing them as necessary and as having their ultimate reference to God. But since the mind is united to the body and since the body is exposed to all sorts of external influences, mind comes to be gripped by imagination. We have already said that according to the

¹ *Ethics* II Prop. 40 Scholium. 2.

Vedānta also, in *vyavahāra* the ego always judges things from the viewpoint of the particular body and hence its view is partial and false. Our great handicap therefore is our association with the body. It is difficult to agree with Caird when he says that Spinoza knows nothing of the Platonic notion of the corporeal state as an imprisonment of the soul, from which death liberates it.¹ We agree that according to Spinoza mere death cannot liberate us ; rather it is the knowledge of God that gives us freedom. One wonders whether in Plato also mere death is enough. Nevertheless when he says that "the mind can only imagine anything or remember what is passed while the body endures"² and that reason which is the very essence of mind by its very nature perceives things truly,³ we cannot but feel that the corporeal state is a veritable imprisonment.⁴ In the scholium to Prop. 44 Part II Spinoza gives us a detailed description as to how our illusions of contingency and time are because of the body.

The general characteristics of the knowledge called imagination are that at this level we consider things to be isolated and independent ; we treat them as free causes and regard them only as contingent ; we do not see the eternity of things, we only know their duration ; time, measure and number are all products of imagination. We imagine ourselves free regarding our actions and judgments, and the result is that we refer our ideas and affections either to external objects or to the human

1 Caird P. 292.

2 *Ethics* V Prop. 21.

3 *Ibid* II Prop. 44.

4 Cf. *Short Treatises* Pp. 122, 125.

mind alone. "These ideas of the modifications of the human body in so far as they have reference only to the human mind are not clear and distinct but confused.¹ They are like conclusions without premises, because our ideas are adequate only in so far as they are referred to God.²

It is not only the isolated perceptions and affections of the body that are confused and vague but also other generalisations and notions that are based on them. Spinoza therefore classifies³ all the different kinds of imagination under two main heads which he calls *experientia vaga* and knowledge from signs. He gives many instances of these. "By hearsay I know the day of my birth, my parentage and other matters about which I have never felt any doubt. By mere experience I know that I shall die.....that oil has the property of feeding fire and water of extinguishing it."⁴

No doubt most of the working principles are based on *vague experience only*. The second form of imagination includes confused ideas based on memory and transcendental or universal terms such as 'being' 'thing' 'man' 'horse' etc.⁵ "These terms arose from the fact that the human body, being limited, is only capable of forming a certain number of images"⁶ and when it has to form images more than that, they become blurred, and the

1 *Ethics* II Prop. 28.

2 *Ibid* II Prop. 32.

3 *Ibid* II Scholium 2 to Prop. 40.

4 *Emendationes* Pp. 6-7.

5 It may be noted that Advaitins do not admit Jāti (generality); see *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*, Ch. I.

6 *Ethics* II Scholium 1 to Prop. 40.

mind begins to comprehend them all under one attribute. Further, it must be noted that "these general notions are not formed by all in the same way but vary with each individual according as the point varies whereby the body has been most often affected, and which the mind most easily imagines or remembers."¹ This is why man is sometimes called a laughing animal or a featherless biped or a reasoning animal etc. In short, all ideas based on fragmentary perceptions, association, memory and abstraction belong to imagination or opinion.

B. Reason

The second kind of knowledge which we have is of the common notions and adequate ideas of the properties of things.² Be it recalled that Spinoza has already shown that there are certain common ideas which can be conceived only as adequate. He calls them principles of *ratiocination* or reason. In the *Emendatione* he speaks of this knowledge as that in which "the essence of one thing is concluded from the essence of another."³ It is possible to confuse the notions of imagination with these ideas of reason if it is not remembered that in the case of the former our notions are based only on accidental and haphazard perceptions, and as such, they differ from individual to individual, but the ideas of reason are adequate and universal and tell us the essences of things. But he says that although it enables us to draw conclusions without risk of error, yet it is not

1 *Ethics* II Scholium to Prop. 40

² *Ibid.* II Prop. 38 Corollary.

³ *Emendatione* P. 6.

by itself sufficient to put us in possession of the perfection we aim at.¹

It appears that reason or knowledge of the second order also is based on some intuition.² Spinoza refutes the possibility of an infinite regress in the process of discovering truth and points out that the understanding by its native strength makes for itself intellectual instruments³ wherewith it is able to discover further truth. The true method is not to seek a sign of the truth⁴ but the truth itself, because a true idea must necessarily first of all exist in us as a natural instrument,⁵ and it is with the help of this as the standard that other truths are known. Thus it appears that Spinoza believes that the universal principles of knowledge are not to be had by a mere association of ideas of things in time and space but by an inner perception of the intellect.

But even though the second order of knowledge, in which the ideas of things are known under certain species of eternity and involve the eternal and infinite essence of God, is true, yet this form of knowledge does not completely unite us to God.⁶ Reason, as will be shown later, makes us virtuous i.e., active, and free from bondage and thereby produces a tranquillity of mind in this present life. But the final effect of the life of reason is an intuitive knowledge of God which makes man immortal.⁷ In this respect, life of reason may roughly be

1 *Emendatione* P. 9.

2 Cf. Experience can never teach us the essence of things. *Correspondence*, X P. 109.

3 *Emendatione* P. 10.

4 *Ibid* P. 11.

5 *Ibid* P. 12.

6 *Ethics* V Scholium to Prop. 36. Also *Emendatione* P. 9.

7 *Short Treatise* P. 63. Spinoza says that reason causes good desires and intuition upright love.

said to correspond to what we call *manana* in the Vedānta. A constant contemplation of the real origin of the Universe i.e., of Brahman, leads to the intuitive or direct knowledge of the Absolute in which the knower and the known are merged. Let us now see whether Spinoza's conception of the third order of knowledge which he calls *scientia intuitiva* as proceeding "from an adequate idea of the absolute essence of certain attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things."¹ corresponds to what the Vedānta calls *Brahma-sākṣātkāra*.

C. Intuition

In his *Short Treatise* we read that "so long as we do not have a *clear idea* of God which unites us to him in such a way that it *leaves us not a thing* to love besides himself, we cannot say truly that we are one with God and depend directly upon him."² Again, "clear cognition we call that which is not by reasoning but by a feeling and enjoyment of the thing itself and this far surpasses the others."³ In the *Ethics* also he says that a general knowledge of the dependence of things on God "does not affect our mind so much as when the same conclusion is derived from the actual essence of some particular thing which we say depends on God."⁴ It is obvious therefore that this third kind of knowledge both regarding its nature and power is much superior to any other.

As regards the origin of the *scientia intuitiva*, it is said that it "depends upon the mind as its formal cause in

¹ *Ethics* II Prop. 40 Scholium 2.

² *Short Treatise* P. 31.

³ *Ibid* P. 62.

⁴ *Ethics* V Scholium to Prop. 36.

so far as the mind is eternal"¹ The mind does not conceive any thing under the form of eternity except in so far as it conceives its own body under the form of eternity, that is, except in so far as it is eternal.² For this knowledge we do not depend upon things but upon reason which knows the eternal and infinite essence of God, from which we may deduce "many things which we may adequately know and therefore form that third kind of knowledge."³ In the *Emendatione* also it is said that a thing is perceived solely through its essence or through the knowledge of its proximate cause.⁴ This knowledge is direct and not inferential as is evident from the example of which Spinoza seems to be very fond and which he gives in the *Short Treatise*, in the *Emendatione*⁵ and also in the *Ethics*.⁶ If three numbers are given and the fourth which shall be to the third as the second is to the first is to be found, it can be done in three ways. Men like tradesmen will simply recall what their masters had told them without proof. This would be hearsay. Others, on the basis of their experience may construct the general principle of finding out the fourth by multiplying the second two and dividing it by the first, and may apply it to particular cases. This is the method of reason. But another man "with the clearest of perceptions has need neither of hearsay nor experience nor logical

1 *Ethics* V Prop. 31.

2 *Ibid* Proof.

3 *Ibid* II Scholium. Prop. 4.

4 *Emendatione* P. 6.

5 *Ibid* P. 7.

6 *Ethics* II Scholium. 2 Prop. 40.

thought, because by his penetration he sees proportion directly in all his calculations."¹ Spinoza admits² that he has been able to know very few things by this kind of knowledge but the ideal is nevertheless intuition alone which unites us to God.

¹ *Short Treatise* P. 62.

² *Emendatione* P. 7.

CHAPTER VIII

BONDAGE AND FREEDOM

I

The Spiritual Attitude

In a previous section we have said that the question regarding the ideal of life is not an isolated question and that it necessarily involves issues of a metaphysical nature. The reason is that the first point one has to be sure of is whether the ideal is to be achieved by our endeavour or it is already a fact. This question is important, but it can be answered only when we know the status of the individual and his relation to the ideal. The importance of the question is that if it is believed that the ideal is achieved by effort, then it would not be something eternal and infinite i.e., it is not spiritual; because the spiritual man rightly or wrongly seeks the eternal good, and that which is produced or conditioned cannot by its very nature be eternal. If, however, the ideal is recognised to be something eternal i.e., something that is already there, then the question will be as to why it does not affect our life. There must be some obstruction which prevents us from enjoying the ideal, and it must be removed ; we must be free from that obstruction. Our endeavour then would not be for achieving something positive but for something negative, that is, freedom. Freedom alone can be the goal of a spiritual discipline. Rightly therefore Spinoza terms natural

life as bondage and regards the spiritual goal as freedom.

Freedom from what ? is the next question. The answer is 'freedom from ignorance ;' because if the supreme good is eternal and if we are not able to enjoy it, this can be only on account of our ignorance of it. It is but natural for each one of us to seek what we know to be real and valuable, and hence if we do not seek and enjoy the infinite and eternal good, it is only because we do not know it to be real or as real as the worldly good. So long as we are worldly-minded we consider this temporary body to be our real self ; we make it the standard of our judgments. That which serves the bodily needs is felt to be good and that which does not, is declared to be bad. We live the life of the body ; riches, fame and pleasures are our values. Our attitude is utterly objective ; our happiness or unhappiness depends on objects and circumstances, and is only derivative and relative.

In order to be able to seek the eternal, one has to be free from the objective attitude. One has to realise that the pleasure that the objects yield is not inherent in them, but only relative to our desire for having them ; objects have no power to please or displease us. In fact, this is the greatest characteristic of the spiritually awakenend man ; he comes to realise that his happiness or unhappiness depends on himself rather than on objects. Therefore, instead of endeavouring to improve the circumstances, his endeavour is to improve himself. Instead of making the surface of the earth thornless, he tries to put on a pair of shoes, as it were. Self-culture begins. The causes of our passions are traced inside rather than outside us.

In order to inwardise our attention or to free us from the objective attitude, Spinoza tries, in his Preface to the Fourth Part of the *Ethics*, to show that our notions of good and bad are not absolute but relative. Things are not good or bad in themselves but in relation to our appetite. "As for the terms Good and Bad," he says, "they indicate no positive quality in things regarded in themselves, but are merely modes of thinking or notions which we form from the comparison of things with one another. Thus one and the same thing can be at the same time good, bad, and indifferent. For instance, music is good for him that is melancholy, bad for him that mourns ; for him that is deaf, it is neither good nor bad." Vehement opposition is sometimes expressed¹ to the reduction of the good to the actually desired, yet self-analysis shows that in practice, for us the good is what we desire. Anyway, the point is that the source of the ideas of goodness and badness being in us, the source of passions that arise from them is also in us; all passions arise from our likes and dislikes. Hence in order to know the root of passions a searching self-analysis must be made.

II

Analysis of Emotions

Spinoza asks us to disabuse our minds of certain misconceptions before attempting to analyse emotions.

¹ Cf. Taylor. *Mind* XLVI N. S. P. 295 "the further reduction of good to the actually desired attempted by Spinoza, as by so many others is positively preposterous unless its meaning is completely transformed by the explanation that no man knows, except in the vaguest way, what it is that he actually desires."

We must free our minds of the notions of good and bad ; our prejudice regarding these may interfere as much with our study of emotions as it does with that of nature. • Emotions must not be treated as a separate class of facts ; they are like all other facts of nature, and so the geometrical method must be as rigorously applied here as elsewhere. Our object is not to "abuse and deride the emotions and actions of men" but to understand them. The error which others who have treated of emotions have committed is that they "appear to conceive man to be situated in nature as a kingdom within a kingdom. For they believe that he disturbs rather than follows nature's order, that he has absolute control over his actions, and that he is determined solely by himself."¹ There is no loophole, defect or discontinuity in nature ; it is always and everywhere one and the same.² It is possible to understand the causes of emotions much in the same manner in which we understand other facts of nature.

It is evident that Spinoza, in the above remarks, has in view the believers in free will, and is unwilling to follow the facile method of tracing the vices and failings of men to their free will. Free will, as they conceive it, is utterly indeterminate, and to explain a particular determinate fact of nature in terms of what is indeterminate in a general way is as good as not explaining at all. An indeterminate will cannot be a particular will but a universal will, and so practically identical with substance. An indeterminate will can be the cause not of one particular but all particulars, and the cause of everything is not the

1 *E/bies* Preface to Part III.

2 *Ibid.*

cause of any one thing. To tell a man that he runs into ruin freely is to baffle him ; it embarrasses him because he finds that he is driven into certain circumstances inspite of himself. It is the very crux of the spiritual problem as to why we see the better and follow the worse. Arjuna gives vent to a universal feeling when he cries¹ to the Lord: "By what is man dragged on to commit sin ? Unwilling but constrained by force as it were." The Lord instead of asking him to refer it to his free will shows Arjuna how natural forces called *guṇas* work in man and how he is almost at the mercy of them. Different mental states are but symptomatic of the rise and fall of the waves of the *guṇas*. The will which is said to determine our actions is not something indeterminate but determinate, and is, being the product of the three *guṇas*, of three kinds in general. Spinoza when he wants to consider human actions and desires as if they were lines, planes and solids, means nothing else than that we should, instead of talking of the intangible, consider the practical difficulties of the spiritual life.

Spinoza has already told us his views regarding the relation of body and mind in connection with his treatment of knowledge.² It has to be recalled here when we have to study the emotions. The mind and the body are one and the same thing considered first under the attribute of thought and second under the attribute of extension. But this must not be understood to mean that the body can determine the mind to think or the mind can determine body to motion or rest.³

1 Gītā III 36 ; Also Cf. *Mahābhārata* Jānāmi dharmam na ca me pravṛttiḥ; Jānāmy adharmam na ca me nivṛttiḥ.

2 Cf. *Ethics*. Scholium to Prop. 7 Part II

3 *Ethics* III Prop. 2.

The mental and the physical facts form two independent series, each link of which has its cause only in the chain to which it belongs. It is necessary to bear this in mind particularly in view of the fact that it has become an inveterate habit with us to think that mind and body can influence each other mutually. There are ever so many ways¹ in which people convince themselves of the truth of the idea of the interaction of body and mind, but they can never tell us exactly the way in which the operation takes place. The truth is that mind and body, although one and the same thing conceived differently, do not act on each other. Thus Spinoza's theory seems at once to accept and reject the Vedāntic or the Sāṃkhya view of body and *buddhi* ; it accepts that view to the extent it considers both to be one, and it rejects that to the extent the two are conceived to be parallel.

The logical consequence of the above view of the relation of body and mind is that we can understand all the changes of our life by analysing our mind alone ; "the order of states of activity and passivity in our body is simultaneous in nature with the order of states of activity and passivity in the mind."² Hence an emotion is a "modification of the body whereby the active power of the said body is increased or diminished, aided or constrained and also the ideas of such modifications."³ Thus the definition of emotion has reference to both mind and body or their modifications. The same idea is more explicitly put in Proposition 2 of the same part. "Whatsoever increases or diminishes, helps or hinders

1 *Ethics* III Scholium to Prop. 2 Also, II Scholium to Prop. 49.

2 Ibid III Scholium to Prop. 2.

3 Ibid III Definition III.

the power of activity in our body, the idea thereof increases or diminishes, helps or hinders the power of thought."

Why is the power of mind or body increased or decreased by an emotion? The power of the body as also of the mind is to preserve its own being; "every thing, in so far as it is in itself, endeavours to persist in its own being."¹ This endeavour to persist is nothing but the actual essence of the thing.² It follows from this that nothing can be destroyed so long as it is allowed to persist in its own being. An object cannot contain in itself anything capable of destroying it, and so "nothing can be destroyed except by a cause external to itself."³ This is to say that things are open to the influences from outside also,⁴ one mind is affected by another other and so also the body. To the extent an activity of the body or mind is traceable to its essence or its *conatus*, it may be said to be active, but when an activity is referred to something outside, it is passive. "I say that we act when anything takes place either within us or externally to us, whereof we are the adequate cause; that is, when through our nature something takes place within us or externally to us which can through our nature alone be clearly and distinctly understood. On the other hand, I say that we are passive as regards something when that something takes place within us, or follows from our nature externally, we being only the partial cause."⁵ In reference to the mind alone an emo-

1 *Ethics* III Prop. 6.

2 Ibid. Prop. 7.

3 Ibid. Prop. 4.

4 Cf. *Ethics* III Postulate 1 & Prop. 1.

5 *Ethics* III Definition. ii.

tion which is a passion is a confused idea.¹ It is thus evident that emotions are of two kinds, namely, active and passive.

The endeavour to persist in its own being, "when referred solely to the mind, is called *will*, when referred to the mind and body in conjunction it is called appetite."² Spinoza does not tell us what it is called when referred to the body alone, perhaps it might be called inertia. But he notes that between appetite and desire there is no difference except that desire is appetite with the consciousness thereof.³ This will or desire to persist is the cause of pleasure and pain. When the mind passes to a greater perfection i.e., when the will succeeds, we have pleasure. But when the mind passes to a lesser perfection i.e., when the will is hindered and frustrated, we have the emotion of pain. Thus these three, namely desire, pleasure and pain are the three primary emotions ; all others are secondary⁴ and arise from these. In our terminology, *rāga*, *dveṣa* and *abhiniveśa* are the root-causes of all emotions.

"There are as many kinds of pleasure," says Spinoza, "of pain, of desire and of every emotion compounded of these, such as vacillations of spirit or derived from these, such as love, hatred hope, fear etc., as there are kinds of objects whereby we are affected."⁵ It is thus well-nigh impossible to exhaust the list of emotions, and so Spinoza gives us descriptions and definitions of only

1 Cf. *Ethics* III The general definition of the Emotions.

2 Ibid, Scholium to Prop. 9.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid Scholium. to Prop. 11.

5 Ibid III Prop. 56.

about forty-eight kinds of emotions. If we look at the list of emotions, it will be evident that many of them may not be properly called emotions in modern psychology, but keeping Spinoza's definition in view they may be conceded.

There is nothing particularly remarkable about Spinoza's definitions of emotions except his geometrical deduction of all from pleasure and pain. Love, for example, is pleasure accompanied by the idea of an external cause. Spinoza expresses¹ his disagreement with the definition that love is the lover's wish to unite himself to the loved object. This definition, he points out, brings out only a property of love and not its essence which is pleasure. But when it is said that it is the wish of the lover to unite himself to the beloved, it is not meant, Spinoza warns us, that wish is a free decision of the mind, "neither do I mean a desire of being united to the loved object when it is absent, or of continuing in its presence when it is at hand ; for love can be conceived without either of these desires ; but by wish I mean the contentment which is in the lover, on account of the presence of the beloved object, whereby the pleasure of the lover is strengthened, or at least maintained".²

III

The Laws of Emotions

Spinoza gives us a description of the different ways in which our emotions change. A knowledge of the laws of emotions helps an aspirant to modify his ways and habits in practical life ; in fact all the religious commands regarding the regulations of our lives are implicitly based on fundamental psychological laws. In the

1 *Ethics* III Definitions of the Emotions VI Explanation.

2 *Ibid.*

Ethics, Part III from proposition 12 to proposition 55 a description of these laws is given. Spinoza only describes in these propositions the laws of association and imitations of emotions and their various forms.¹

It is needless to expect any originality in his treatment of emotions. Still there are some very valuable observations which seem to be Spinoza's own. In this connection what is particularly remarkable is Spinoza's attempt to demonstrate geometrically that hatred can be conquered by love alone, and when so conquered hatred passes into love.² The proposition that "love or hatred towards a thing which we conceive to be free, must, other conditions being similar, be greater than if it were felt toward a thing acting by necessity"³ is meant to prepare us for his determinism. Similarly his remark that "any emotion of a given individual differs from the emotion of another individual only in so far as the essence of the one individual differs from the essence of the other"⁴ is intelligible only if we remember that desire or *conatus* is the actual essence of every individual, and that an emotion is only an effect of this. "Hence it follows that the emotions of the animals which are called irrational differ only from man's emotions, to the extent that brute nature differs from human nature."⁵

It is evident from the above statement that the nature of an emotion corresponds to the different grades of mind, reason or knowledge either in the same individual at different times or in different kinds of individuals at the

1 Cf. Wolfson Vol II Pp. 213-17.

2 Cf. *Ethics* III Props. 43 and 44.

3 Ibid III Prop. 49.

4 Ibid Prop. 57.

5 Ibid III Scholium to Prop. 57.

same time. To the three grades of knowledge belong the three kinds of emotional life. Life of passions corresponds to the knowledge through the senses or what Spinoza calls *experientia vaga*. At this stage man is more or less like animals, and his mind is liable to all sorts of ingresses from out side ; he is passive. The second stage of emotional life is the life of virtue or activity ; this corresponds to reason in the sphere of knowledge and is possible to man only. At this level man is able to assign things to their adequate causes ; he distinguishes actions from passions and tries to see things in the light of eternity, because it is the nature of reason to see things as necessary. And finally, even as reason ripens into intuition, the life of virtue culminates into the love of God which is *blessedness*. Man attains his eternity. These three stages of life remind us of the three grades of life corresponding to the three *guṇas* described in the *Gītā*. The life of passions is the life of *tamas* ; the life of virtue is the life of *sattva-rajas* and the life of the intellectual love of God may be said to correspond to the life of pure *sattva*.

IV

Active Emotions

Besides passive emotions there are active emotions also,¹ that is, emotions the adequate cause of which can be found in our own nature and not outside us. The reason for this is that the mind does not have confused or inadequate ideas alone but has also clear and adequate ideas. And to the extent our emotions are referred to these clear and distinct ideas they are active. One notable feature of active emotions is that there is no such

¹ *Ethics* III Prop. 58.

emotion which arises from pain ;¹ while passive emotions arise from both pleasure and pain, active emotions arise from pleasure alone. The reason is obvious ; pain is that which hinders the activity of the mind which is thinking, and hence anything which hinders thinking cannot be found in mind's nature. Spinoza has already shown that things that are contrary by nature i.e., in so far as one can destroy the other, cannot exist in the same thing. Hence to say that there can be active pain is to say that there can be in the nature of the mind the desire to persist and not to persist at the same time.

"All actions following from emotion, which are attributable to the mind in virtue of its understanding I set down to strength of character (*fortitudo*), which I divide into courage (*animositas*) and high-mindedness (*generositas*). By courage I mean the desire whereby every man strives to preserve his own being in accordance solely with the dictates of reason. By high-mindedness I mean the desire whereby every man endeavours, solely under the dictates of reason, to aid other men and to unite them to himself in friendship."² This is the brief description Spinoza gives of the life of reason in the third part of the *Ethics*. A fuller description will be given after we have considered the strength of emotions and the power of the mind. In the meantime, it may be noted that in Spinoza's scheme of morals there is room for both personal and social morality. In fact, Spinoza emphasises social morality so much that he goes to the extent of saying that man is God to man and that self-

1 *Ethics* III Prop. 59.

2 *Ibid* Scholium to Prop. 59.

preservation which is the highest virtue is not only not anti-social but is possible to its highest degree only in the common-wealth.

V

The Strength of Emotions

In the fourth part of the *Ethics* Spinoza takes up the question of the strength of our bondage and the kind of life that may lead to our freedom from that. When the nature and the origin of passions have been discovered, it is necessary to know the force behind them, the force which appears to be practically irresistible and which makes it well nigh impossible for us to moderate the emotions. This is what Spinoza tells us in the first eighteen propositions of this part.¹

The first difficulty in our way is that the knowledge of truth is not so active and dynamic as to remove the hold of the false on us. Even when we come to know the distance and size of the sun, it continues to appear near and small ; "thus imaginations do not vanish at the presence of the truth, in virtue of its being true but because other imaginations, stronger than the first, supervene and exclude the present existence of what we imagined."² Secondly, since we as men are necessarily a part of Nature³ and since it is impossible that man should not be a part of Nature, or that he should be capable of undergoing no changes, save such as can be understood through his nature only as their adequate cause,⁴ we

1 Cf. Wolfson Vol II P. 224 The Professor's view that Spinoza shows the untenability of the distinction between emotions and virtues in these propositions seems to be contrary to what Spinoza says in the scholium to Prop. 18 Part IV.

2 *Ethics* IV Scholium to Prop. I.

3 Ibid IV Prop. 2.

4 Ibid. Prop. 4.

are of necessity passive. If man were not acted upon by things external, "he would not be able to die but would always necessarily exist,"¹ because nothing can be destroyed except by an external cause. The third handicap from which we suffer is that "the force whereby a man persists in existing is limited, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes."² The passions that depend upon external causes are overwhelming, because the power of a passion depends not on our power of persisting but "on the power of external cause compared with our own."³

There are other causes also of human infirmity and inconstancy. There are certain laws which emotions necessarily follow and we cannot interfere with those laws. "An emotion, whereof we conceive the cause to be with us at the present time, is stronger than if we did not conceive the cause to be with us."⁴ This is so because the image of a thing past or future is, all other conditions being equal, weaker than that of the present.⁵ Similarly, that which is of the near future or near past awakens stronger emotion than that which is of a remote future or past.⁶ On the strength of the same argument it can be said that what is conceived to be necessary will cause stronger emotion than what is possible or contingent, or what is conceived to be possible causes stronger emotion than the contingent ; an emotion towards what is contingent will be weaker than what is past.⁷

1 *Ethics* IV Prop. 4. Proof

2 *Ibid* IV Prop. 3.

3 *Ibid*. Prop. 5.

4 *Ibid*. Prop. 9.

5 *Ibid* IV Prop. 9 Corollary.

6 *Ibid*. Prop. 10.

7 *Ibid* Props. 11, 12, 13.

Another difficulty of a different nature is that "an emotion can only be controlled or destroyed by another emotion contrary thereto, and with more power for controlling emotion."¹ An evident implication of this, would be that "a true knowledge of good and evil cannot check any emotion by virtue of being true, but only in so far as it is considered as an emotion."² This is so, because "the knowledge of good and evil is nothing else but the emotion of pleasure and pain, in so far as we are conscious thereof."³ It is implied that knowledge of good and evil is of different intensities and its efficacy depends upon its intensity. From this we can understand why many people who know the better follow the worse. Knowledge to be power must be an emotion and not a mere awareness. What is strongly hinted in all these propositions is that control of emotions is not a matter of will ; will itself is a part of nature.

The above consideration of the strength of our difficulties need not land us in despair ; firstly because there are, as will be shown in the sequel, antidotes to all these, and secondly, because some of these difficulties may themselves be converted into advantages from which we may derive strength. Thus for example, the law of necessity pervading the whole nature might appear to be inexorable and overwhelming, but the consciousness of this law takes us out of it and provides us with a fulcrum, as it were. In the following pages it will be shown how the life of virtue is possible inspite of all odds against us.

1 *Ethics* IV. Prop. 7.

2 *Ibid.* Prop. 14.

3 *Ibid.* Prop. 8.

VI

The Nature of Human Bondage

"Human infirmity in moderating and checking the emotions I name bondage. For when a man is a prey to his emotions, he is not his own master, but lies at the mercy of fortune ; so much so that he is often compelled, while seeing that which is better for him, to follow that which is worse."¹ This statement of Spinoza is clear enough but when certain other statements are recalled, there arises some difficulty, so much so that Caird is led to declare that "Spinoza's conception of freedom is self-contradictory."² It is therefore worthwhile to consider Spinoza's conception of human bondage if only to see the justice or otherwise of Caird's criticism.

Spinoza, it is held, starts with the conception of bondage as finitude or modality but does not stick to it. He tells us that every individual thing acts on and is acted on by other individual things. This is true of man also. "It is impossible that man should not be a part of Nature, or that he should be capable of undergoing no changes, save such as can be understood through his nature only as their adequate cause."³ Not only this, man's power as against that of Nature is in the proportion of one to infinity.⁴ As Spinoza himself says "we are in many ways driven about by external causes, and that like waves of the sea driven by contrary winds we toss to and fro unwitting of the issues and of our fate."⁵ From all this it appears that we are wholly conditioned by external causes.

1 *Ethics* Preface to Part IV.

2 Caird. P. 269.

3 *Ethics* IV Prop. 4.

4 *Ibid* IV Prop. 3.

5 *Ibid* III Scholium. to Prop. 59.

Caird argues firstly that a conscious being like man cannot be conceived to be wholly determined by external causes like the inert objects of physical nature.¹ Self-consciousness gives to man self-determination which is a negation of external causation. If, however, man is deprived of self-determination and is treated as a piece of stone, then no question of bondage, much less that of freedom, would arise. "To be a part of nature would be no bondage to man if he *could* be a part of it. One mode of matter is not in bondage to another....."² Caird suggests that it is perhaps on account of these difficulties that Spinoza introduces a modification in the conception of mind. He identifies *conatus* with reason and thereby gives self-determination to man ;³ human bondage, instead of being merely another name for finitude or the determination of a single mode by the infinite-series of external modes, becomes now the subjection of reason or of a being essentially rational to the irrational.⁴

Caird seems to be under a wrong impression. It is wrong to imagine that Spinoza in the beginning identifies bondage with finitude or modality. According to him we are, it is true, passive *in so far* as we are part of Nature, and we cannot cease to be a part of Nature. But nowhere does he say that man is *wholly* a part of nature. The phrase 'in so far as' which is very significantly used by Spinoza but is disliked by Caird, also points out that man is not completely a part of nature. Spinoza is not guilty of self-contradiction when he says on the one hand that every mode is infinitely determined by others

1 Caird. P. 267.

2 Ibid 269.

3 *Ethics* IV Prop. 26 Proof.

4 Caird. 271.

and on the other, that it endeavours to persist in its own being ; because it only means that every mode has a positive and eternal aspect which is its *conatus* and a negative and temporary aspect which is the fact of its determination by others. There are two elements in the constitution of man, the substantial and the modal or the eternal and the temporal, and bondage is the meeting of the two. Surely Caird cannot hold that man is not at all determined by external causes ? Perhaps no man can boast of that. If, however, Caird means that man cannot be *wholly* a part of nature, he is at one with Spinoza. Man is not only spirit but spirit in flesh and hence his bondage. If this were not so, there would be no impulse to freedom.¹ Rightly or wrongly man finds himself being governed by nature in ever so many ways. Our bondage consists in the belief that we are nothing beyond nature, and freedom would mean the realisation that it is due to ignorance that man considers himself *wholly* a part of nature. For Spinoza there is an element in man which is beyond nature, and he makes it clear when he comes to talk of our eternity in the last section of the *Ethics*.

To start with, one has to admit that man is at once both a part of nature as well as independent of it. The situation is almost paradoxical. If man could be a part of Nature, then Nature would be no longer bondage to him, and if, however, he could not be a part of Nature, he would not at all have been involved in Nature. And yet, he has to be both, and the riddle can be solved only by pointing out that though *apparently* he is a part of nature *really* he is not. Our objection to Caird's

¹ Cf. Alexander Shanks. *An Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics*, p. 79.
"The possibility of freedom is found in the dual nature of things."

view is that man is independent of nature not because he has self-consciousness or free will but because his *reality* or essence is beyond nature. This is why his bondage comes to mean really his ignorance ; there can be no real bondage; in fact there is no bondage at all. If man could really be a part of nature there would be no freedom at all. For Spinoza perfection is not merely ideal; perfection is reality itself. Freedom is not acquired ; it is discovered. Self-determination which Caird claims for man cannot belong to man *as man* but as divine, because it belongs to God or the Divine alone.

Hence Spinoza points out, to start with, that man is a part of nature as a mode. But *really* he is not. It is because he considers himself to be a mode that he is in bondage. Man, in order to be free, has to attain real knowledge, the knowledge of his substance, the knowledge that he is identical with God. It is ignorance that makes our bondage appear real. Bondage can never be real, otherwise it can never be removed. Nature is really too much for us so long as we are ignorant, that is, so long as we regard external things as the causes of our passions and ourselves as mere modes. But once we come to know the real cause of passions and our real nature, once we come to have adequate knowledge, we become free from the clutches of Nature. Adequate knowledge of the causes of passions is nothing but the knowledge of the ourself in reference to God, because we know truly only when we know things in reference to God.

VII

The Possibility of Freedom

So long as we have not realised the Divinity in us or our freedom, there can be no doubt that we are in bondage ; the very fact that we know good and evil

proves our bondage. "If men were born free they would, so long as they remained free, form no conception of good and evil."¹ Spinoza points out that the story of the forbidden fruit only shows that God wanted man to be free but man fell in bondage when he forgot God ; to know God is to be out of the bondage. It may be interesting to note here that Hindus think that bondage is not known through reason but through revelation alone. This is so because bondage here means the cycle of birth and death, a fact which can be known only from revelation and not from reason. If, however, bondage is defined as subjection to passions, there is no harm in saying that it is known through reason.

That we are in bondage is certain. The question is : Are we bound hand and foot or is there some hope for freedom too ? Some students of Spinoza are of the opinion that Spinoza's philosophy, particularly his thoroughgoing determinism, leaves no hope for freedom. As already noted, it appears as if we are like waves of the sea driven by ever so many contrary winds. If we do not have any freedom, how can we ever hope to get out of the whirlpool in which we are caught ? Spinoza, it may be pointed out, was aware of all the criticisms offered by modern critics, and still he adhered to his doctrine of determinism. And he does it in good company.² It is his conviction that determinism does not hamper morality, much less spirituality. It is there-

¹ *Ethics* IV Prop. 68.

² Cf. Alexander Shanks. *An Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics*, P. 81. He observes that belief in destiny is deeply rooted in our minds and appears frequently side by side with our overt profession of belief in free will....In current Christianity the idea of freedom is coupled with the idea of God's providence.

fore necessary to understand the case for determinism as against freedom so far as moral life is concerned.

Spinoza claims¹ that his view does not only remove many inconsistencies but is in fact advantageous in regulating our lives. The doctrine of determinism besides bringing peace to the mind teaches us that our greatest happiness or blessedness lies in the knowledge of God. It teaches us to face both the aspects of our life with equanimity, since everything is eternally decreed. It improves social life in that we refrain from hating or envying anyone. A free citizen is not one who is free enough to go against law but one who obeys it understandingly. Thus the doctrine is helpful in making us good citizens too.¹

"Moreover, this inevitable necessity," he says, "of things sets aside neither divine nor human laws. For moral precepts, whether they receive the form of law from God himself or not, are nevertheless divine, and salutary; whether we receive the good, which follows from virtue and the divine life, from God as a Judge, or whether it emanates from the necessity of the divine nature, it will not therefore be either more or less desirable, just as on the other hand, the evils which follow from evil deeds are not to be feared any the less because they follow from them necessarily; and lastly whether we do what we do necessarily or freely, we are still led by hope or by fear."² It appears to us that when moralists express vehement objection to Spinoza's theory, they fail to understand this passage properly. The difficulty here is that he asserts without showing how his theory does

1 Cf. *Ethics* Appendix to Part II Four advantages are enumerated.

2 *Correspondence* XLIII P. 257. Also LXXV P. 347.

not interfere with any of the practical or *vyāvahārika* issues.¹ He wants to urge that the inevitable necessity of things is not of the same level as our empirical life and therefore not only does not but cannot clash with any of our practical affairs or attitudes. Taylor exclaims, "How is conversion to be effected in the face of necessity?"² Caird also asserts that the possibility of freedom demands a fulcrum from where the process of conversion can be started. The question is whether this fulcrum can be a part of Nature or not. It is evident that it cannot be a part of Nature (Necessity), nor can it be accepted as outside Nature because then it cannot work in Nature. The paradox can be resolved only if we realise that the fulcrum is already there in our consciousness of freedom. Everyone of us feels free, and it is this psychological fact that can act as the fulcrum and enable us to realise that it is not this volitional freedom but a deeper freedom that is ours. Freedom of will leads to the suicide of will, as it were, in the consciousness of God or substance. But it may be objected that if free-will is an illusion, how can it help us in our conversion? A similar objection is raised against the Vedānta also. It is asked: How can the teacher (Guru) and the scriptures help us if they are false? The Vedāntin points out that they are false not in the sense that they tell us lies, but in the sense that they are unreal, and that even an unreal thing can

1 Cf. Pollock Pp. 189-90 He defends Spinoza and distinguishes his view from fatalism.

2 Taylor *Mind* XLVI N. S. P. 156. Also cf. Caird P. 260 "To make freedom a possible achievement, there must be at least some fulcrum on which it can be made to rest." Also P. 268.

produce effects ; just as even a false snake produces fear. Hence there seems to be no inconsistency in saying that the unreal can be utilised for the purposes of realising the real. In fact, the unreal alone can help us ; because the Absolute in itself is inactive.¹ God has to incarnate Himself i.e., has to assume a body which is unreal, in order to be able to help us. Necessity does not mean that there cannot be even an illusion of free-will nor does it mean that this illusory free-will cannot be requisitioned in the process of its own self-annihilation. An unreal self enables us to realise our real self which is God.

Another difficulty which prevents many scholars of the West from understanding Spinoza, is their failure to distinguish morality and spirituality. The west is primarily moralistic and the standpoint of spirituality is so different from that of morality that the latter may in a sense be regarded even as an impediment to the former. Morality is essentially egoistic and therefore assertive of the ego ; it arises in conflicts and therefore presupposes a consciousness of alternative values which means the negation of an absolute value. Morality begins with the empirical self as its starting point and hence the feeling of freedom is necessarily associated with it. The essence of spirituality is freedom from the ego ; it is non-egoistic and transcends duality. It arises with the awareness of an absolute value and not in conflicts ; its endeavour is *not to develop but to get rid of the empirical self* or the ego. The feeling of freedom is but of a secondary importance to it ; spiritual life is not based upon our evaluation of alternatives or resolution of conflicts, but upon our vision

¹ *Cogitata*; "For being considered merely as being does not affect as a substance."

of the infinite. It is this vision rather than our will that transforms us.¹ Hence the question as to how conversion to the spiritual point of view will be possible if there is no freedom, amounts to this : How to give vision to one who does not have it. To this the only answer is : 'The wind bloweth where it listeth'. Spirituality, though it can be awakened, is not teachable in the same sense in which morality is. Really speaking, knowledge does not require freedom; waking does not require the freedom to cancel the illusions of dream.

Spinoza is therefore right when he says² that determinism does not interfere with morality. For the spiritual man, it is immaterial whether he follows the moral law necessarily or freely, because his mind is not turned towards his ego, as it is in the case of the moral man, but towards God. In fact, morality becomes so organic to the personality of the spiritual man that he follows it almost unconsciously, almost as a matter of taste. The spiritual man is moral effortlessly or instinctively without the experience of a conflict. It is only when men act under feelings, that is, under the domination of their egoity, that they require rewards and punishments.³ Spiritual morality which springs from our experience of the infinite is different from volitional morality ;⁴ the former is an attainment and the latter is an endeavour. Blyenbergh, and together with him many others like Taylor, fails to grasp this distinction

1 Taylor, *Mind* XLVI N. S. Pp. 286-87.

2 *Correspondence* XLIII P. 257 quoted above. In this connection Sidgwick's view that the problem of freedom is not important for Ethics may be compared with Spinoza's.

3 *Correspondence*, XLIII P. 256.

4 Taylor, *Mind* XLVI N. S. P. 284.

and remarks that "he who avoids evil things merely because they are repugnant to his nature has little to boast of his virtue."¹ A really spiritual man could not have made this remark, because such a man is not so particular about boasting of virtue as about virtue or humility and self-negation. Sentimentalism, whether moral or any other, is one of the disqualifications of a philosopher.

In India the above distinctions, namely, that between the *vyāvahārika* and the *pāramārthika* and that between morality and spirituality, are so easily understood that there is seldom any discussion about them. Almost all the systems whether of Hinduism or Buddhism or Jainism accept the doctrine of Karma and yet do not deny the possibility of *puruṣārtha*. The *Gītā* goes to the extent of saying : Beings follow their own nature, what can restraint do ?² Western thinkers make much fuss over it and make it an opportunity to inveigh against Indian thought as such. When a truly spiritual point of view is not there, determinism appears to imply a denial of moral endeavour and progress. The essence of spirituality is neither in endeavour nor in progress but in the attainment of a vision.

VIII

The Power of the Intellect

Considering the strength of the bondage in which we are, it is not enough to show that determinism does not prevent us from living a free life. This is only a negative suggestion. It is incumbent upon us to find out a positive method by which we can achieve that

¹ *Correspondence*, XXII P. 186. This is in reply to Spinoza's letter (XXI).

² *Gītā* III, 33.

freedom which is in reality already ours. No one need be disheartened to think that freedom from bondage is impossible. What reveals to us our bondage reveals to us at the same time the possibility of our freedom also;¹ in fact the *consciousness of bondage is itself to a great extent freedom from that bondage*. To realise something as bondage implies at once a dissociation from that, and also an awareness of one's real self. One who is not aware of one's bondage i.e., one who is not free already, at least to some extent, cannot even endeavour to be free. Nothing is meant for animals or for those who are at that level. But although the consciousness of bondage assures us of the possibility of attaining freedom, it does not actually tell us as to how to do it. For that purpose we must know the powers and potentialities of our mind which may be utilized; because nobody need imagine that determinism means that a "wise man is on a par with a fool in controlling his emotions."² Knowledge repays.

The belief that virtue is an uphill task implies that moral life is an imposition, something not quite compatible with, if not against, our nature. Morality is taken to be a dead weight upon our back. We must disabuse our mind of this false notion. Really speaking virtue is the very essence of our nature. The story of the fall of man indicates that it is not the fall but morality that is original. Virtue is the principle of self-maintenance, while vice is the principle of self-destruction. One has only to follow one's own self in order to

1 Cf. Caird, P. 275. The pain of bondage is the prophecy of freedom.

2 *Ethics* IV Scholium. to Prop. 17.

be virtuous. Moral life need not be painful. In fact pleasure is transition to greater and pain to lesser perfection. Life, pleasure, perfection and virtue are only synonyms. Vice is imperfection, pain and self-destruction. It is only on account of illusion or ignorance of our real self that what is really self-destructive seems to give pleasure. To say that vice is natural would simply mean that the whole of nature is heading towards self-destruction. The merits of the theory that the basis of virtue is our self-love will be examined later. Here it may be pointed out that it is a source of great strength to know that virtue is something congenial to our self, our *real* self.

There are certain principles the knowledge of which may add to our strength in moderating our passions. A passion is a particular form of pleasure or pain as referred to an external cause. The confusion which gives rise to passions is just this habit of referreing things to their inadequate causes. Hence Spinoza says that "If we remove a disturbance of the spirit or emotion, from the thought of an external cause, and unite it to the other thoughts, then will the love or hatred toward that external cause, and also the vacillations of spirit which arise from these emotions, be destroyed."¹ Since a passion is only a confused idea, it "ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea thereof."² And since "there is no modification of the body, whereof we cannot form some clear and distinct conception,"³

¹ *Ethics*, V. Prop. 2.

² *Ibid.* V Prop. 3.

³ *Ibid.* Prop. 4.

it follows that "there is no emotion, whereof we cannot form some clear and distinct conception."¹ It is thus possible to control all our emotions through knowledge alone. The principle that knowledge of passions curbs the passions means that under the stern gaze of reflection the confused mass of ideas which produce passions splits up, and is no more able to act as a power. Passion is a forward movement of consciousness and reflection upon passion is a backward movement or withdrawal, and hence the rise of the latter means necessarily an abatement or ebbing away of the former. The two cannot be together. Modern psychologists may point out that the attempt to reflect upon a passion with the desire of controlling it is a kind of auto-suggestion and hence it works. Whatever may be the *modus operandi*, the fact is that knowledge redeems.

Reason helps us in another way if we exercise it continuously. It is the nature of reason to see things as necessary and not as contingent. The attitude of regarding things as inevitable counterbalances our excitements and controls our emotions.² "The mind has greater power over the emotion and is less subject thereto, in so far as it understands all things as necessary."³ It may be that one is not able to reconcile one-self to this law of universal necessity and rebels against it. But if one is able to accept it as a universal law, one will not rebel against the particular causes that seem to bring about unpleasant circumstances. The consciousness of a

1 *Ethics* V. Prop 4 Corollary

2 Ibid. V Scholium to Prop. 6 "No one pities an infant because it cannot speak."

3 Ibid, V Prop. 6.

universal law has the peculiar dynamism of putting us at the periphery of the law or outside the law. Paradoxically enough, an acceptance of the law means freedom from it, while a rebellion against it is a nemesis. A rebel is a confused man ; he is unaware of the self-contradiction in asserting his freedom or the freedom of a mode.

“So long as we are not assailed by emotions contrary to our nature, we have the power of arranging and associating the modifications of our body according to the intellectual order.”¹ This is a practical hint to us. The spiritual man has to be ready for sudden invasions; the strength that he acquires in times of peace is what he can depend on in times of turmoil. “The best we can do, therefore, so long as we do not possess a perfect knowledge of emotions, is to frame a system of right conduct or fixed practical precepts, to commit it to memory and to apply it forthwith to the particular circumstances which now and again meet us in life, so that our imagination may become fully imbued therewith and that it may be always ready to our hand.”² Such maxims as ‘hatred should be overcome by love,’ ‘man is God to man’ ‘complete acquiescence is the result of right living’ ‘men no less than every thing else act by the necessity of their nature,’ are to be constantly reflected on and remembered. Our bondage is so deep-rooted that we cannot really be free unless virtue becomes second nature to us. This is possible only by long practice and meditation. There is no short cut to spirituality. Arjuna cries almost in despair, “The mind is very restless, O Kṛṣṇa, It is impetuous, strong and difficult to

¹ *Ethics*, V Prop. 10.

² *Ibid.* Scholium to Prop. 10.

bend. I deem it as hard to curb as the wind." The Lord consoles¹ him by saying that it is doubtless so, and prescribes to him no other remedy except that of *practice* and *renunciation*. Even a little practice gives hope and confidence.

The last and most important fact to be noted regarding the power of the mind is that it "can bring it about that all bodily modifications or images of things may be referred to the idea of God."² To refer a modification to the idea of God is to understand it adequately and clearly, and to understand adequately is to be active. When the mind is active it feels pleasure³, and since this pleasure is accompanied by the idea of God, the mind begins to love God. For we love what gives pleasure to us. Hence the proposition that "he who clearly and distinctly understands himself and his emotions loves God, and so much the more in proportion as he more understands himself and his emotions."⁴ This love toward God is the greatest counterforce against passion, because an emotion can be checked only by a contrary emotion which is stronger, and the love of God can be the highest emotion. Thus in his capacity to love the infinite and the eternal lies man's greatest hope and promise for redemption. At this stage knowledge turns into experience, reason into intuition; we enjoy blessedness and attain eternity.

IX

Life of Reason or Virtue

Now that it is established that virtue is not impossible in Spinozism, and that it is in fact the very nature of

1 *Gītā* VI, 34, 35.

2 *Ethics* V Prop. 14.

3 *Ibid* III Prop. 59 Also Cf. the definition of pleasure.

4 *Ibid* V. Prop. 15.

reason to be active, the nature of virtue and of virtuous life may be examined.

As already pointed out the notions of good and bad are relative. These terms indicate nothing positive or objective ; they are mere concepts and indicate only our modes of thought.¹ One and the same thing can be good, bad or indifferent. We call that good which we desire, and that is bad which we do not desire. Thus goodness or otherwise of things is not inherent in them but is only in our attitude. Hence the goodness or otherwise of life is not to be judged in the light of any set standard. We cannot judge life from outside ; spirituality is a matter of the individual's inner experience. Morality judges conduct, spirituality keeps in view the inner character. The spiritual status of man cannot be judged from his conduct, because "to all actions, whereto we are determined by emotion wherein the mind is passive, we can be determined without emotion, by reason."² Spinoza seems here to make the same distinction which Kant made when he pointed out that a good will is good in itself without reference to its external expression. Spirituality can be judged only from within.

Another point which Spinoza is anxious to emphasise is that nothing can be unconditionally desired by the self i.e., can be its absolute good. Anything which is not a part of the self can be desired only as a means to something which the self considers to be its own, rightly or wrongly. And if we come to think of it, the self desires nothing *unconditionally* except itself ; everything

1 *Ethics* Preface to Part IV.

2 Ibid IV Prop. 59 Also *Short Treatise* P. 78.

else is desired only as a means. Both the propositions, namely, that the self *does* not desire anything else except itself, and that it cannot desire anything else *unconditionally* except itself,¹ are true. Hence Spinoza says that virtue, if it is to be absolute good, has to be regarded as somekind of self-love.² Kant told us that the good will is its own justification, that is, is absolute good. But he did not tell us that only that which is somekind of self-love can be absolute good. In the Kantian ethics, it remains to be shown why the good will is to be desired or what we would lose if we did not desire it. Spinoza has answered the question by saying that one cannot but desire it because it is a part of one's self. Spinoza anticipates³ the objection that suicide does not express self-love and yet it is desired. He answers that suicide does not indicate any lack of self-love or desire for self-satisfaction but only an ignorance of the proper way of getting self-satisfaction. The desire for self-destruction is self-contradictory ; and since nature cannot harbour self-contradiction in its bosom, Spinoza traces⁴ suicide to external causes. The man who commits suicide is not his own self, is ignorant of his self.

With these points in view, Spinoza develops his ethics of self-love in conscious opposition⁵ to those who imagine that self-love is not the basis of piety but of impiety. The desire to live is more fundamental than the

1 *Ethics* IV Scholium Prop. 18.

2 Ibid IV Prop. 20 its proof and its scholium. Also, corollary to Prop. 22. Scholium to Prop. 18.

3 Ibid IV Scholium to Prop. 20.

4 Ibid IV Scholium to prop. 20.

5 Ibid. IV Scholium to Prop. 18.

desire to live well¹ and hence no virtue can be conceived as prior to this virtue of endeavouring to preserve one-self.² It is the very essence of man, as also of everything else, to preserve his own self ; virtue is only his power to be able to do so.³ This virtue is absolute because "no one endeavours to preserve his being for the sake of anything else."⁴ Self-preservation is an end in itself. Hence the more each one of us seeks what is useful to him the more endowed with virtue he is. This does not mean that Spinoza gives free licence to everyone to do whatever he likes, because by useful, he says, "*I mean what is truly useful.*"⁵ In fact he goes to the extent of suggesting that "if someone sees that he can live better on the gallows than at his own table, he would act most foolishly if he did not go and hang himself."⁶ Spinoza is not hesitant to say this because he is sure that no thinking man can come to that conclusion.

It may be incidentally remarked here that Spinoza's doctrine of self-love may be more correctly understood as an approximation to the Upaniṣadic utterance that everything is dear for the sake of the self (*Ātmanas tu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati*)⁷, than as a kind of naturalism. In the philosophy of Spinoza, as in all absolutism, the real and the ideal are identical. To seek the true self is to seek the ideal. The charge of positivism cannot hold against Spinoza. Nor does his philo-

1 *Ethics* IV Prop. 21.

2 *Ibid.* Prop. 22.

3 *Ibid* IV Definition 8.

4 *Ibid* IV Prop. 25.

5 *Ibid* IV Scholium to Prop. 18.

6

7 Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up. II 4 (v).

sophy teach "selfishness ;" because one who says that each man should seek what is useful to him can hardly be said to be selfish. The selfish man seeks his own good and wants that every one else should act only for his sake. Moreover, Spinoza points out in no ambiguous terms that a virtuous man who acts under the guidance of reason cannot but feel that it is in the interest¹ of his own self-preservation that everyone should strive for self-preservation. There will be no fear of conflict among such men, because each one acts according to reason which is one in all.² Social quarrels are not due to real self-love but due to passions,³ or due to the love of a wrong self, i.e., due to ignorance or confusion. The significance of the definition of virtue as self-preservation can be better appreciated if we keep in view that vice or sin cannot be defined better than as self-destruction. It is not *for* sin but *by* sin that our self is destroyed ; we become what we are not. An ignorant man, instead of living for his real self, is all the time mad after an unreal self and is really killing himself.

Man is happy when reason is active, that is, when reason understands. Man will be most happy when reason understands the highest idea, namely, that of God. Hence "the mind's highest good is the knowledge of God, and the mind's highest virtue is to know."⁴ It may be objected that it is possible to be virtuous without knowing God and so Spinoza's above proposition is not

1 *Ethics* Corollary and Scholium to Prop. 35. Cf. S. Hampshire *Spinoza*, P. 163. He observes that the spiritual man is *uncompetitive*.

2 *Ethics* IV Scholium to Prop. 18. Also Prop. 35.

3 *Ibid* IV Props. 32, 33, 34.

4 *Ibid* IV Prop. 28.

true to facts. The answer to this objection is that virtue here does not mean mere moral excellence but spiritual experience.

It need not be imagined that the life of reason is a colourless or dry kind of life ; because, as already noted, all actions that are determined by passions can also be determined by reason alone.¹ It is possible to have pleasure and mirth which is always good.² But localised pleasure or stimulation is bad;³ "the virtuous man cares for the pleasure of the whole body rather than for that of only one part, and desires a greater future good before a lesser present one."⁴ Similarly, honour, favour, and self-complacency are not opposed to reason.⁵ It is thus evident that Spinoza was not a stoic⁶ but a believer in what the *Gītā* calls even, temperate life (*yuktābhāra-ribhāra*). He tells us that "to make use of what comes in our way, and to enjoy it as much as possible (not to the point of satiety, for that would not be enjoyment) is the part of a wise man. I say it is the part of a wise man to refresh and recreate himself with moderate pleasant food and drink, and also with perfumes, with the soft beauty of growing plants, with dress, with music, with many sports, with theatres, and the like, such as every man may make use of without injury to his neighbour."⁷ He only wanted that nothing should be done which disturbs our understanding.

1 *Ethics* IV Prop. 59.

2 *Ibid.* Prop. 42.

3 *Ibid.* Prop. 43.

4 *Ibid.* Prop. 60, 66.

5 *Ibid.* IV Props. 51, 52, 53.

6 Pollock, P. 247. Also Cf. S. Hampshire *Spinoza*, Pp. 167-8.

7 *Ethics* IV. Scholium. II to Prop 45.

There are some emotions such as pity, and repentance which may ordinarily seem to be good but are really unworthy of a man of reason. "He who rightly realizes that all things follow from the necessity of the divine nature and come to pass in accordance with the eternal laws and rules of nature will not find anything worthy of hatred, derision or contempt, nor will he bestow pity on anything, but to the utmost extent of human virtue he will endeavour to do well, as the saying is and to rejoice."¹ That pity, humility and repentance are bad need not shock us; because it is said not for the multitude but for those few men who depend on reason. The mob is controlled by feelings and not by reason; "hence we need not wonder that the prophets who consulted the good not of a few, but of all, so strenuously commended Humility, Repentance and Reverence."² Those who are led neither by these emotions nor by reason to help others are really inhuman.³ In fact "those who are a prey to these emotions may be led much more easily than others to live under the guidance of reason....."⁴ It is better to be moved to good actions by emotion than not to be moved at all. A religious man is generally led by emotions to what a philosopher is led by reason.

There are other characteristics also of a virtuous man. The man who lives under the guidance of reason cannot but return love and kindness for other men's hatred, anger, contempt etc.⁵ "He who chooses

1 *Ethics* IV Scholium. to Prop. 50.

2 *Ibid.* IV Scholium. to Prop. 54.

3 *Ibid.* IV Scholium. to Prop. 50

4 *Ibid.* Scholium. to Prop. 54.

5 *Ibid.* Prop. 46.

to avenge wrongs with hatred is assuredly wretched. But he who strives to conquer hatred with love, fights his battle in joy and confidence ; he withstands many as easily as one, and has very little need of fortune's aid. Those whom he vanquishes yield joyfully, not through failure, but through increase in their powers."¹ What a wonderful exposition of the gospel of love ! Society can stand only on the basis of love. The principle of reason is unity and universality, and hence it cannot prescribe anything which creates discord. There is no fear of our going to excess in the case of desires arising from reason.²

The man of reason is not a prey to the emotions of hopes and fears,³ because he is equally affected whether the idea be of a thing past, present or future ; he conceives things under *the form of eternity*⁴ (*sub quadam aeternitatis specie*) in which there is no such distinction. Such a man does not do good out of hope or fear, but out of understanding. It does not mean that a free man is so fool-hardy as not to avoid difficulties. "The virtue of a free man is seen to be as great, when it declines dangers, as when it overcomes them."⁵ He knows when to fight and when to retreat. But at the same time a man of reason would not like to save his life by fraud or deception ; because reason cannot prescribe deception.⁶ Reason prescribes, as Kant would put it, only that which can be universally accepted as a principle.

1 *Ethics* Scholium to Pro. 46.

2 *Ibid.* Prop. 61.

3 *Ibid.* Props. 47 and 62.

4 *Ibid.* II 2 Prop. 46 Corollary.

5 *Ibid.* IV Prop. 69.

6 *Ibid.* Prop. 72.

Hence risking life to avoid the practice of deception will not be against self-preservation or virtue. It is evident here that by self-preservation Spinoza does not mean merely the preservation of this life but freedom or the capacity to live according to the dictates of reason. Hence the virtuous man thinks least of death and most of life according to reason.¹

So far about the personal aspect of virtuous life. The social aspect of it is that a man who is guided by reason is more free in a state where he lives under a general system of law, than in solitude where he is independent.² This might appear a little paradoxical but really it is not. Law takes away the freedom of only one who does not want to obey it ; it cannot be an imposition on the man of reason, because he wants to obey it ; law is, as it were, part of his constitution. Virtuous men alone can form the ideal society ; because in so far as men live under the guidance of reason they necessarily agree in nature³, and the greatest good of those who follow virtue is common to all.⁴ The good which the virtuous man desires for himself, he desires for others also.⁵ He tries to see that others also live under the guidance of reason. This attitude must be distinguished from the modern fanatical craze for propaganda and proselytization which is the source of such great trouble in society, because it is rooted in ambition and not in reason. The reason why the virtuous man's desire to

1 *Ethics* Prop. 67.

2 *Ibid.* Prop. 73.

3 *Ibid.* Prop. 35.

4 *Ibid.* Prop. 36.

5 *Ibid.* Prop. 37.

make others live like himself does not produce conflict is that the good which he wants to share with others is unlike the worldly good, not lessened but increased thereby. All can possess it equally. This is what distinguishes virtue from ambition.¹ Virtuous men, though they alone are truly grateful to each other, are rather cautious to accept benefits from ignorant men.² The reason is that virtuous men do not repay men with similar gifts but with those things only which they (virtuous men) consider to be valuable. This may not please the ignorant, and hence the man of reason tries to avoid such occasions.

¹ *Ethics* III Corollary and Scholium to Prop. 31. Also VI scholium I to prop. 37.

² *Ibid* IV Props. 70, 71.

CHAPTER IX

THE ETERNITY OF MAN

In proposition 15 Part V of the *Ethics*, Spinoza suddenly introduces the phrase "Love of God." In the scholium to Proposition 20 of the same part he says that so far he has said all that concerns this life, and that "it is now time to pass on to those matters, which appertain to the duration of the mind, without relation to the body." All this might appear a little too abrupt unless the transition is made clear.

The phrase 'love of God' ought not to cause any surprise. Spinoza leads us to this conception quite gradually. He tells us that the mind feels pleasure when it understands, that is, when it sees, things in reference to God. And when the idea of an object pleases the mind, it loves that object. Hence it is natural that the mind, since it understands itself adequately in reference to the idea of God and is thereby pleased, should love God. As to the expression 'duration of the mind without relation to the body,' it has become now a matter of controversy as to whether it means post mortem existence or something else, and so the expression has lost much of its sting. It will not be proper to attach any definite meaning to it before considering the propositions that are meant to elaborate the idea contained in it. An attempt will therefore be made to understand the nature of the love of God and its effect on the mind so far as its destiny is concerned.

I

Amor Intellectualis Dei (its genesis)

There are three grades of life corresponding to the three grades of knowledge, namely, imagination, reason and intuition. At the level of imagination men are more or less like animals. But when reflection sets in, we begin to live in the light of reason, which is the life of activity or virtue. As already noted, reason perceives the common properties of things and tries to see them under the form of necessity. But our vision at this stage is not clear and direct. It is only in intuition that our knowledge becomes most immediate and powerful. When reason ripens into intuition, the life of virtue changes into the life of love. It is only at this stage that a complete mastery over passions is possible.

Though reason also like intuition tries to apprehend its object *sub specie aeternitatis*, yet it is from intuition alone that the intellectual love of God *necessarily* arises.¹ The reason is that the knowledge of God based on reason is only general and indirect. An adequate knowledge of a thing has a necessary reference to the idea of God, because everything depends for its essence and existence on God. But this reference at the level of reason is more general than pointed.² It is only the knowledge of individual things that carries us near God.³ Intuition alone apprehends *res singulares*.⁴ And since no other individual thing can be more adequately known than the mind itself, the object of intuition is

1 *Ethics* V Prop. 32 Corollary.

2 *Ibid* V Prop. 36 Scholium.

3 *Ibid* V. Prop. 24.

4 *Ibid* V Prop. 24.

mind itself. Hence Spinoza says that "the third kind of knowledge depends on the mind as its formal cause, in so far as the mind itself is eternal."¹ The mind is able to see its own dependence unlike that of anything else on God directly, "since the essence of our mind consists solely in knowledge whereof the beginning and the foundation is God, it becomes clear to us, in what manner and way our mind, as to its essence and existence, follows from the divine nature and constantly depends on God."² Hence Spinoza's general proposition³ that the more one understands oneself and one's emotions the more one loves God.

From the above it might appear that the intellectual love of God is wholly a matter of the mind, and that the body has no part to play in it. But Spinoza does not seem to think so. From the proposition that "he who possesses a body capable of the greatest number of activities possesses a mind whereof the greatest part is eternal."⁴, it appears that the body and the mind grow together to some extent. This is as it should be, if the two are to be regarded as two aspects of one and the same thing. It may be remarked here that it is universally believed, particularly in India, that with spiritual progress the physical body too undergoes fundamental changes, and its sensitivity is increased.

1 *Ethics* V Prop. 31 Proof and also cf. "the mind in so far as it is eternal is capable of knowing everything which can follow from this given knowledge of God, in other words, of knowing things by the third kind of knowledge."

2 *Ibid* V Prop. 15 Scholium.

3 *Ibid*. Prop. 15.

4 *Ibid*. Prop. 39.

What is most remarkable regarding Spinoza's conception of the intellectual love of God is *a transition of the mind from self-love to God-love*. It may be recalled that according to Spinoza self-preservation is the absolute value and there is nothing more valuable for which it can be desired. How to reconcile this with the love of God ? A reconciliation is impossible so long as God and self are regarded as different, because in that case either self-love or God-love will have to be taken as relative and not as absolute ; *self-love can be consistent with God-love only if self and God are taken to be identical*. In intuition the mind comes to recognise God as its own perfection, reality or self, and so there remains no difference between self-love and God-love. This difference is there only until intuition wells up. God cannot *really* be loved until He is realised to be our substance, our self.¹ This is the truth of the *Upaniṣadic* saying "That thou art." Knowledge dissolves our finitude and we come to realise our infinity i.e., our identity with Brahman. Does not Spinoza also say that we are already eternal ? Our eternity is the divinity which pervades everything. If self-love and God-love are to be harmonised, the two must be identical.

An objection regarding Spinoza's conception of our love of God may be noted. Is it possible to love an indeterminate Being with whom one can have no personal relation and from whom one can expect no consolation ? Is it not a misnomer to use the word love for Spinoza's God ? Further, how can an immanent God be made the

¹ Cf. *Short Treatise*, P. 133 "Only direct cognition causes love so that when we come to know God in this way we must necessarily become one with him."

object of our love and worship? This whole criticism is advanced from the side of Theism. The objection seems to imply that God should be conceived as an attractive object so that each one of us may love Him naturally. It is perhaps imagined that there is no other kind of love except the natural human love which is based on hopes and fears. Prof. Wolfson explains our love of the indeterminate substance in the manner that although God is not a person, still it is possible for us to behave towards Him *as if* He were a person. But the difficulty is that our love then will not be intellectual. Hence the only way of meeting the objection is, as Spinoza does, to explode the above assumptions. The man of hopes and fears cannot love God *really*, that is to say, every one cannot love God *really* and that our ordinary love cannot be the exemplar of our love for God. The man of hopes and fears worships his own desires rather than God. The meaning of love, in the context of Spinoza's philosophy, is not sentimental attachment but the experience of ecstasy in the knowledge of the Absolute. Even if we admit some kind of personal relationship with God, it will obtain only in religion and not in philosophy. The man of desires (*ārta and arthārthī*) can find consolation only in religion where God is conceived not as indeterminate but as an Almighty Person.

The other argument that an immanent God cannot be made the object of devotion implies that God, in order to be loved and worshipped, must be something other than our sinful self. The argument is really suicidal; for what is absolutely other than our self cannot really be loved. An absolutely transcendent God can inspire awe but not love in us. As already shown, nothing can, be really and unconditionally loved except the self

and so God, in order to be really loved, must be taken to be our own self. *If love always required a duality of the lover and the beloved, self-love would become unthinkable.* Even in the case of the love between human beings, we speak of the unity of souls.

II

Amor Intellectualis Dei (its characteristics)

Since God is our substance and reality, our greatest good must necessarily be the knowledge of God. And to know God is to love Him ; nobody can remain indifferent after knowing God. And to know is to become and to enjoy ; the very manner in which spiritual pursuit begins implies it. He alone who has seen the vanity of life, and is in search of that anchor where his soul can find eternal peace, can know God. This love towards God, since it arises in the mind when it has freed itself of all attachments, must of necessity occupy the mind chiefly.¹ There is nothing more valuable than this ; man cannot but respond to Him unreservedly. A lukewarm heart cannot experience the Divine joy. A heart in which the spiritual fire is kindled knows no control. Hence, it would be better to say that the love of God possesses the mind not only chiefly but exclusively ; nothing empirical or finite can possess the mind wholly, only the infinite can. The spiritual good is not only the highest good but the only real good. The term highest may indicate that there are other goods also, only lower than the spiritual in the scale. To think so would be nothing short of a misunderstanding. The infinite and the finite do not form a hierarchy or gradation ; the one is a

¹ *Ethics* V Prop. 16.

negation of the other, that is, *the two cannot be had at the same time*. There can be no compromise between God and the world. The consciousness of the eternal, whenever it dawns, wins over the whole mind completely.

It is apparent from all this that "he who loves God cannot endeavour that God should love him in return."¹ Such an endeavour would imply a contradiction ; once an individual has reached the infinite there cannot be left in him any desire for the satisfaction of which he may wish reciprocation from God. There is *sarva-prāpti* in the love and knowledge of God ; like God Himself man becomes *akāma*, *āptakāma* and *ātmakāma*. If a man wants reciprocation from God, he wants, as Spinoza puts it rather curtly, that God whom he loves should not be God.² God from whom men expect favours is not the real God, but only a creation of their desires and sentiments. Really, "God is without passions ; neither is he affected by any emotion of pleasure and pain,"³ God is eternally perfect. He cannot hate or love any *individual*. Nor can any individual hate Him⁴ ; for there can be no pain accompanied by the idea of God, and there can be no hatred without pain. Worldly things alone cause both pleasure and pain, and hence love towards them may turn into hatred, not so the love of God. Spinoza anticipates⁵ the objection whether God cannot be hated as the cause of pain, since He is the cause of everything. He answers that such an ob-

1 *Ethics*. V Prop. 19.

2 Ibid. Cf. Proof of the above.

3 Ibid. Prop. 17.

4 Ibid. Prop. 18.

5 Ibid. Scholium to Prop. 18.

jector fails to understand the meaning of the knowledge of God. The paradox of the situation is that "in so far as we understand God to be the cause of pain, we to that extent feel pleasure."¹ Knowledge of God and pain cannot go together. Nothing can pollute or remove the love of God.² Envy and jealousy arise only with regard to objects that cannot be possessed by all at the same time. Love of God can be shared equally by all. One man's love does not obstruct another man ; in fact it helps him, because love of God increases according as greater number of men cherish it. Love of God is therefore most constant.³

It would now be clear why Spinoza calls this love towards God intellectual.⁴ His purpose is only to distinguish it from the religious or the sentimental love towards God. This love is not based on any personal relationship with God but purely on our knowledge of Him. Its characteristic feature is its dependence upon our knowledge of the self which is the same thing as the knowledge of God. It is the avowed aim of the philosophy of Spinoza to lead us to the eternal good purely on the strength of knowledge rather than on that of obedience and devotion. Love of God, in the philosophy of Spinoza, must not be confused with ordinary sentimental feeling; it can be equated only with knowledge. Intellectual love alone can be eternal since it is based on knowledge or the realisation of reality.⁵

1 *Ethics* prop 18 Scholium

2 *Ibid.* V Prop 20. Also Prop. 37.

3 *Ibid.* V Prop. 20. Scholium.

4 Martineau, *Types* vol I p. 356. Also Joachim, *Study* P. 305.

5 *Ethics*, V Prop. 34. Corollary

It is sometimes pointed out that inspite of the religious language that Spinoza uses regarding the intellectual love, it is nothing more than devotion to truth, or enthusiasm for philosophy.¹ It is argued that there is no God in the real sense of the term in Spinoza's philosophy, and hence there can be no real love of God in it. On the other hand, it is maintained that the characteristics which he gives of the intellectual love are the very characteristics that are found "throughout the religious literatures in the languages ascessible to Spinoza."² There are, it is said, four traditional characteristics of love. Firstly, love means a union with the object of love ; secondly, love may be said to be of different kinds in accordance with the perfection of the object loved ; thirdly, love of God is said to spring from the knowledge of God ; and finally, love of God ought to occupy one's entire mind. All these are said to be found in Spinoza.³ It is argued that Spinoza could rightly speak of the love of God, because even though he denied that God could behave as a person he did not deny the personality of God in the sense that man could have a personal attitude towards Him as if He were a person.⁴

It appears to us that both of these views suffer from a bias which is disadvantageous to a correct estimate of the subsequent propositions of the last part of the *Ethics*. Martineau interprets the *intellectual love* merely as devotion to truth, because according to him there is nothing in Spinoza's philosophy except Thought and

1 Martineau, *Types* vol I 356, *Study* Pp. 349-50.

2 Wolfson. vol II P. 276.

3 Ibid. P. 279.

4 Ibid, P. 283.

Extension and their modes. Naturally therefore he complains that some of Spinoza's propositions cause delirium. He is led to see only inconsistency in Spinoza. Prof. Woflson's presupposition that Spinoza is only adumbrating the traditional views leads him to the conclusion that Spinoza believed in personal relation to God. The correct view of the intellectual love is that it is neither mere scientific devotion to truth nor the religious man's sentimental worship, but the philosopher's knowledge of things *sub specie aeternitatis*, of God and of the self. It is called love only to indicate that *it yields joy, that it is value*. Knowledge of the unity of self and substance causes the same mental satisfaction¹ which intense personal love does ; nay it does more, it ends in their union. Our view of the intellectual love will instead of causing headache synthesise Spinoza's doctrine of immortality with the rest of his philosophy.

Our contention that the love of God means nothing but the awareness of one's identity with the Universal self is substantiated by the very propositions that appear to have caused great difficulty to many students of Spinoza. These propositions are that the intellectual love is eternal,² that God loves himself with an infinite intellectual love³ and that our love is identical with the very love whereby God loves himself.⁴ The intellectual love of God though it may appear to have a beginning⁵ in time, is nevertheless eternal ; it is already there

1 *Ethics*. V Prop. 27.

2 *Ibid.* V Prop. 33.

3 *Ibid.* Prop. 35.

4 *Ibid.* Prop. 36.

5 Cf. Martineau, *Types* Vol I, P. 359.

and is not a creation of the mind. As already pointed out, the mind is ultimately identical with substance, not as a mode but as free from modal ascriptions. All the divisions and differences are due to imagination. This is the only way in which Spinoza's two apparently self-contradictory statements, namely, that nothing except substance is eternal and that mind is eternal, can be harmonised. The two cannot be eternal as independent but only as identical entities. The other question is : in what sense can the absolutely indeterminate being be said to love himself ? How can one's love for God be identical with the very love whereby God loves Himself ? Self-love, it is pointed out, is not possible without self-consciousness, and self-consciousness cannot be ascribed to the Absolute. Moreover, if God's intellect is utterly different from our intellect, how can our intellectual love be identical with His ? How can God love man in loving Himself ? Again, is it not self-contradiction to say at one place that God does not love or hate any one, and at another, that God loves himself and also man ?

That God loves himself with infinite love does not mean that there is any process or activity in God. God is ever perfect and self-identical. He is not capable of feelings or of a transition from lesser perfection to greater perfection. God is *āpta kāma*, *ātma kāma* and *akāma* as the Upaniṣad puts it. God's self-love means only that he does not desire anything else ; it means the enjoyment of eternal and infinite Bliss. His is not a self-conscious or volitional kind of love. The reason why God's love of Himself is not easily understood is that it is forgotten that Spinoza identifies¹ self-love with the *conatus*

1 *Ethics* IV. Prop. 18 Scholium

or the tendency to persist. For him self-love is not a self-conscious attitude of the mind, rather it is the very nature of reality or substance.¹ In this sense, God too may be said to have *conatus* or self-love. In fact, our self-love is only a shadow of God's self-love. The self-love which manifests itself in the form of will is only symptomatic of our identity with God. In the light of this interpretation Taylor's dilemma² that Spinoza must either attribute *intellectus and voluntas* to God or the very possibility of self-love is denied, disappears. It also becomes possible to understand how God's self-love and our love for Him are identical. God's self-love is a presupposition of our self-love ; in loving himself man comes to love God even as God comes to love man in loving Himself. It does not mean that God's self-love is a totality of ours, as Martineau thinks.³ Instead of understanding God as identical with man, we should understand man as identical with God. The infinite is never a collection but a condition of the finites.

The apparent inconsistency in Spinoza's denial of feelings to God and his attribution of love to Him also vanishes. The denial and the affirmation have to be understood in different senses. Spinoza says clearly that 'God does not love' does not mean that He lets us alone, but that there is no room in Him for the love of any particular man or men.⁴ In the *Gītā* the Lord appears to be guilty of a similar self-contradiction.

1 Cf. Wolfson Vol II P. 198.

2 Taylor, *Mind* XLVI Pp. 299-300.

3 Martineau, *Types* Vol I P. 363.

4 *Short Treatise* P. 140.

At one place He says¹, 'I am equally in all beings; there is none hateful or dear to me'. At another place, He says², 'I am supremely dear to the wise and he is dear to me'.

- The former statement means the indeterminate, immanent presence of God in all, while the latter is in praise of God-consciousness which is nothing but the consciousness of one's identity with the universal. Spinoza's statements must not be taken literally; the spiritual rank of Spinoza should make us pause to reconsider the apparent inconsistencies.

III

The Eternity of Mind

Man is not completely free so long as he lives united with the body, because the mind is liable to all kinds of passions caused by the reactions of the body. Confusion enters into the mind with its attachment to the body. Complete freedom is possible, Spinoza suggests, only in two ways;³ either by "restoring the spirits to their first form or by convincing oneself by good reasoning in order to be able to pay no attention to the body." The first kind of freedom is only temporary; it is perhaps like the freedom we have in sleep. The freedom which we have as the reward of true knowledge is eternal and complete.

True knowledge which gives us eternal freedom is not simply a product of reasoning. It is our second birth, a consciousness of quite different effects of love⁴; 'it is as

1 *Gītā* IX 29.

2 *Ibid.* VII 17.

3 *Short Treatise*, P. 126.

4 *Ibid.* P. 135.

different from the first birth as corporeal is from incorporeal or spirit is from flesh."¹ It is direct vision of God, because only "direct cognition causes love, so that when we come to know God in this way, we must necessarily *become one with him*."² Thus it is only in our union with God that true freedom consists. Spinoza goes to the extent of saying that "if we ever have a consciousness of God at least as clear as that by which we are conscious of our own bodies, we must then become united to him *more closely* than with our body, and must *be released from the body*."³

This freedom of the mind from the bondage of the body is possible because its relation or union with the body is only modal rather than substantial. The mind begins to love the body and becomes united with it because the body is the first thing "that the soul comes to know."⁴ The implication is that it is not the nature of the mind to love and to remain united with the body. The mind is capable of enjoying an independent existence, "the human mind cannot be absolutely destroyed with the body but there remains of it something which is eternal."⁵ The mind can exist before and after the body, but this does not mean that we should be able to remember our previous existence, for the eternal part of the mind has no reference to time. Only that part of the mind which is occupied by memory and imagination has reference to time, and this part, since it is necessarily

1 *Short Treatise* P. 135

2 *Ibid.* P. 133.

3 *Short Treatise* P. 122 cf. *dehātma-jñānavaj jñānam dehātma-jñāna-bādhakam. Upadeśasāhasrī IV, 5.*

4 *Short Treatise*, P. 122.

5 *Ethics*. V. Prop. 23.

attached to the body, is destroyed with the body. "The mind can only imagine anything, or remember what is passed while the body endures."¹ Elsewhere Spinoza tells us that human freedom is a "form of existence which our understanding acquires by means of a direct union with God,"² and asks us not to be amazed at these new things. That we acquire our freedom through knowledge, does not mean that it is an acquired³ quality of the mind, because nothing acquired can be eternal. Knowledge does not create or make this freedom ; it only unveils it, so that we are enabled to enjoy it.

Were it not for certain difficulties to which this simple doctrine gives rise in the context of the philosophy of Spinoza, it would be easy to compare it with the Vedāntic view. But inspite of the difficulties, if Spinozism is admitted to be the kind of absolutism demonstrated above, the doctrine of immortality can be understood in no other way than the Vedāntic. The Vedāntic view is that on account of God's *Māyā* there is in the world an appearance of different selves. These selves differ only to the extent they are not-selves i.e., to the extent they are attached to different bodies and *buddhis*. As soon as knowledge dawns upon the individual by dint of his practice of virtue and discrimination, he realises his identity with the universal self and is free from the fortunes of the body. This identity is only cognised and not brought about, because in reality all differences are illusory. So long as man has not realised his identity with Brahman, he may have occasional glimpses of his

1 *Ethics* V Prop. 21. Also Prop. 40 corollary.

2 *Short Treatise* P. 152.

3 Cf. Wolfson, Vol II P. 291 where he compares Spinoza's view to the hylic intellect.

freedom in sleep and *samādhi*, but is not in the possession of eternal bliss. Death does not and cannot free us except from the gross body ; the subtle body persists throughout its different incarnations till its final dissolution is brought about by knowledge. Vedānta envisages the possibility of complete freedom even while the body is there. This is possible because it is not the body but our identification with the body, that is, ignorance, which is the cause of bondage. This fact of freedom though happening in the context of the temporal life of man is nevertheless eternal, because the change does not take place in the eternal but only in what was hiding it. If ignorance hides the eternal and is cancelled after some time, it means, it may be argued, that there is a change of state in the eternal. This would indeed be true if the hiding and its removal were real or true, but *since ignorance and its cancellation are themselves illusory, no real change can be posited in the eternal.* If our illusion were real it could not be cancelled. The cancellation of illusion means not only the revelation of the real but also the consciousness that there is nothing real to hide it ; the real, cannot hide the real. The appearance of plurality which is unreal hides the real unity of existence. Cancellation of illusion means just the consciousness of unity, a consciousness which removes all obstructions lying in our experience of infinite joy. It is to be noted that it is not mere unity but the consciousness of this unity, that opens the door to infinite bliss ; because unity of existence is there even when we are in illusion in which we experience pain.

As shown above, according to Spinoza there are two parts of the mind, the one temporal and the other eternal. This eternal part, we said, is not anything different from

substance but is identical with it, because there cannot be two eternal entities. The unity of the eternal part of the mind with God which is enjoyed in the intellectual love can be nothing else than the consciousness of one's identity with God. Thus the surviving element corresponds to the Vedāntic *Ātman* and the perishing element is the *antahkaraṇa* in which are found memory and imagination. Hence when Spinoza speaks of the survival of the mind after the dissolution of the body he refers not to the mode of the attributes of Thought but to the eternal aspect of it or the substance which underlies it. *Mind and body as modes of the attributes of Thought and Extension dissolve together.* The mental part which dissolves with the body is constituted of memory and imagination. In fact the surviving element cannot be called mind except in a transferred sense. The parallelism of the Attributes is thus untouched.

Some students of Spinoza are reluctant to admit that he can consistently speak of the mind as surviving the body. Joachim goes¹ to the extent of saying that the phrase "this present life" should be regarded as a momentary slip. Caird points out that Spinoza's language regarding the survival of the mind is misleading. "On his principles it would be equally true and equally false to say that the body survives the mind and to say that the mind survives the body."² The popular way of preferring mind to matter is unknown to Spinoza, and "the Platonic notion of the corporeal state as the imprisonment of the soul cannot be derived from Spinozistic

1 Joachim, *Study* P. 296.

2 Caird. P. 290.

principles."¹ If, however, survival is admitted, many inconsistencies enter into the system. To understand immortality as a continued existence is to ignore that spirituality refers to a quality of life. It would seem to ascribe "to death or the destruction of the body what is really due to reason."² Further, the doctrine implies a tacit ascription to the mind of a superiority over the body which is inconsistent with their parallelism as modes of thought and extension.³

If the phrase 'this present life' is a momentary slip what about the proposition that the mind is not wholly destroyed with the body? Survival has to be admitted in some sense. As the statements of Spinoza quoted above show, it is wrong to think that he did not regard the corporeal state as bondage. It is neither the mind nor the body as modes of thought and extension that is eternal but the substance behind them. Still if the eternal element in man is called mind by Spinoza, it is because it is the mind that makes man aware of his eternity. Although eternity may imply prior and posterior existence in the sense in which substance is prior and posterior to modes, still it does not mean 'continued existence' or 'the superiority of mind over body' because it belongs not to them but to their substance. The above objections seem to keep in view individual immortality which Spinoza did not admit. For him eternity means the discovery of one's real nature, that is, one's unity with God or the realisation of the falsity of the temporal differences. If understood in this way, the

1 Caird P. 292.

2 Ibid. P. 291.

3 Ibid. P. 292.

doctrine will not be found to indicate any superiority of mind over body, nor will it interfere with their parallelism. If Spinoza had said that we can be free only after death then it might appear that he attributes to death what is due to knowledge or that he makes immortality a temporal affair. He himself criticises those who confuse eternity with duration.¹ He says explicitly that our eternity is a matter of discovery. Though we cannot remember our existence before our body yet "we feel and know that we are eternal."² To know is to become.

IV

Survival and After.

If the survival of a part of the mind is admitted, two questions arise : What is the nature of the surviving part of the mind and how is it related to God ? It is evident that the answer to the one determines the answer to the other. There has arisen a great controversy regarding the first question. One view is that Spinoza believed in personal immortality, but the other view rejects the suggestion. It would be interesting to review the way in which Spinoza's belief in personal immortality is demonstrated.

Prof. Wolfson tries to show that Spinoza accepted the notion of hylic intellect current in the medieval ages. Like the medievals, Spinoza holds that part³ of the intellect survives death, that the greater the knowledge *sub specie aeternitatis* the greater⁴ the surviving part of the

1 *Ethics* V. Scholium to Prop. 34.

2 *Ibid.* V Scholium to Prop. 23.

3 *Ibid.* V. Prop. 23.

4 *Ibid.* Prop. 38 Proof. Also Prop. 40 Corollary.

mind and that the part which survives is acquired through knowledge. Spinoza believes in pre-existence too, which means that the mind has individuality even when it is free from the body, whether before or after death. From all this it is concluded that immortality is in a certain sense personal and individual.¹ It is held that personal immortality does not interfere with the parallelism of Thought and Extension. In a sense the body also is preserved but it is not immortal since nothing personal is retained in the body after death.² Unlike the body the mind has a foretaste of *blessedness* in the experience of the highest possible mental satisfaction which is the result of intuitive knowledge. Taylor also comes to the conclusion that Spinoza believed in "the duration of the mind after death."³ The surviving parts of men's minds remain distinct not only among themselves but also from God. Taylor speculates about the nature of the surviving part of the mind and says that it consists of two elements only. "One cognitive and one emotional, the cognitive element being concrete but impersonal scientific truth, and the emotional, calm and acquiescence which such truth produces."⁴

It appears to us that the above view is untenable. As Martineau points out, if memory and imagination and together with them part of the love of God which has reference to the body, disappear after death, what is there left to mark our identity?⁵ It is true that Spinoza sometimes speaks of the part and size of the intellect but it

1 Wolfson Vol II P. 318..

2 Ibid P. 295

3 Taylor *Mind* N. S. V. P 155.

4 Ibid. P. 161.

5 Martineau, *Types* Vol I Pp. 379-80.

- would be as wrong to take him literally as the Lord's utterance in the *Gītā* : "In this body the soul is my own eternal part."¹ Even if it is conceded that existence before and after death is individual (although it is difficult to prove it) it does not follow that existence after freedom also is individual. Realisation of one's unity with God makes all the difference. Still less can we argue that since the experience of blessedness here is individual it must be so after death too. The instance of the *Jīvanmukta* has already been given. Spinoza seems to criticise the belief in personal immortality where he says that people "confuse eternity with duration and ascribe it to the imagination or the memory which they believe to remain after death."² Prof. Wolfson seems to have been swayed away by historical precedents.

Martineau disposes of yet another way of proving personal immortality. He examines Camerer's arguments and shows that though self-consciousness is inseparable from every idea yet it cannot prove that there is any survival of personality: because, Martineau thinks³, that self-consciousness in Spinoza does not mean the consciousness of an individual self but only the consciousness of an idea. This kind of self-consciousness cannot be called personal. In the same manner the argument based on Spinoza's statement that the idea of the idea must no less belong to God than the idea itself is frustrated.⁴

The surviving part of the mind since it has no relation to the temporal part, that is, to memory and imagination,

1 *Gītā*, XV, 7. 2 *Ethics* V Scholium to Prop. 36.

3 Cf. Martineau, *Types* Vol I P. 381.

4 *Ibid* P. 382.

cannot acknowledge its continuity with the particular human individual known to the world before death. Martineau disposes¹ of the third argument also for personal immortality in the same manner. He points out that though it is true that knowledge *sub specie aeternitatis* is knowledge of the essence of human body, and also that "the knowledge of the human body is the idea which gives self-consciousness of the mind," yet the knowledge of the body in the two cases not being the same no continuity of self-consciousness after death can be asserted. It is thus concluded that Spinoza's avoidance of the word immortal in the *Ethics* signifies that he himself did not want to assert personal continuity but only the eternity of the mind.

If it is settled that the surviving element of the mind is in no way personal, it is also settled that in the freed mind there is no place for our earthly feelings and emotions, because it is these alone that mark our individuality. *Freedom is a state of pure self-affirmation.* Nay, it is a state of complete unity with God, a unity in which difference or negation has no place. The ideal of absorption in the infinite or the absolute does not seem to be attractive enough to the western minds. To them it appears to be mere blank. They seem to feel that being lost in the Absolute is nothing short of being robbed of everything valuable. This is because there is in the western mind a deep-rooted love for the finite or the empirical or the love of what is mere egoity extolled as individuality. Even absolutists suffer from it, and are anxious to pay homage to the finite. In general, the mind that is fond of the finite is more fit for religion than for philo-

¹ Martineau *Types* Vol I Pp. 383-84.

sophy. In fact it appears that the controversy regarding the problem of personal immortality is more or less the controversy between religion and philosophy. Pure Philosophy regards the Absolute as Indeterminate, self-evident being, and phenomena as illusory, and the relation of the freed soul to God as one of identity. Religion regards God as a person, the world as His real creation, and the relation of the freed soul to God as unison. Our contention is borne out by the fact that whenever religious minds such as Rāmānuja, Vallabha etc., in the East and Cartesians and Hegelians in the West, have tried to deal with the problem of the relation of the finite and the Infinite they have shown sentimental fondness for the finite or individuality. Caird's complaint that Spinoza's conception of freedom as pure self-affirmation or identity has no room in it for feeling or negation and is therefore an impossible notion betrays only his religious or empirical bias.¹ He believes in the transformation² of passions as religious men do. Spinoza who was a true philosopher did not believe in transformation but in freedom, not in unison but in identity.

1 Caird, P. 284.

2 Ibid. P. 285.

CONCLUSION

The point of view which has informed the whole work may be stated once again in brief. To some extent, it has already been anticipated at the outset where we have spoken of Spinoza's originality. We have begun by emphasising the importance of distinguishing the philosophic consciousness from the religious attitude. Since there is an element of religion in almost all of us, in human nature as such, and since there are certain features common to both religion and philosophy, both being spiritual disciplines, confusion between the two can be avoided only if we are constantly vigilant and keep the distinction ever before our mind. If this is not done, there is the fear that the demands of our religious nature will press themselves into philosophy without being detected. This is what has actually happened in the systems of Descartes and Leibniz.

Generally speaking, it may be said that religion is essentially realistic from the outset ; it starts with the affirmation of the self and the world and tries to widen the area of affirmation by introducing into it the concept of God. But God can enter the human world only by himself taking a human colour, and the first reactions of the human soul to this new element must be emotional and sentimental. Thus God enters into man through his sentiments, and starts transforming him from within until man is able to realise his own true nature as also the true nature of God. In this manner religion administers the spiritual remedy in the form of our daily diet, treating us as children incapable of restraint and austerity at the beginning. The religious man has to retrace his steps

to childhood as it were, through a different route, through faith. For this reason, anthropomorphism, dualism, teleology, belief in the freedom of will, etc., may be welcome or even necessary in religion.

Philosophy on the other hand, being a conscious and deliberate search for the ideal, starts with the experience of disillusionment regarding the worldly values and is therefore critical and cautious from the outset. Nothing is too sacred for philosophy ; God, the self and the world, all these are brought in for scrutiny. Reason, and not respect for sentiments, is the governor in philosophy. Philosophy, as also religion to some extent, presupposes a type of awakening which is not common. Being a disillusioned man, the philosopher alone is fit to seek the impersonal truth or the Absolute ; but religion is nothing if not personal. This does not mean any disparagement of religion ; it is said only for the sake of analysis which is in the interest of both religion and philosophy. Spinoza recognises religion also as a sound spiritual discipline.

The adoption of the geometrical method is only for convenience ; it is a systematisation of analysis. But it is also a warning that the philosophy of Spinoza should be approached through reason and not through sentiments. Some western scholars have unnecessarily and unduly taken the geometrical method too seriously. They forget that what matters in Spinoza's philosophy is not the external form but the order of knowledge or the perspective form which everything is to be seen. 'First things first' is the motto of Spinoza ; we must not seek to know God in terms of phenomena, but rather phenomena in reference to God. Science may start with the empirical experience and may also return to it but in philosophy the empirical world is not the first

concern. The structure of Spinoza's *Ethics* as also his philosophy makes this point sufficiently clear.

Besides the inveterate confusion between philosophy and religion, and the lack of proper perspective, there is yet another factor that vitiates some scholars' approach to Spinoza's philosophy, and that is an undue emphasis on history without regard to Spinoza's personality. The effect of history is but relative to the receptivity of the individual ; nothing matters to us unless our mind is open to it. The extraordinary spiritual earnestness of Spinoza, rarely to be found in his predecessors, ought to be enough to mark him as a singular thinker. The influences of the Jewish Rationalists and Descartes were there, but these were woven into a living system of philosophy in a manner which is characteristic of Spinoza's genius. By dint of his peculiar spiritual insight Spinoza was able to straighten many complexities of the past into consistent principles.

It appears to us that Spinoza endeavoured hard in his system to convert the theism and dualism of his predecessors into an absolutism. Those who cannot give up the theistic habits of thought should not hope to understand Spinoza properly ; they would fail to notice the revolution that Spinoza wanted to introduce albeit quietly and imperceptibly, using the same old terms but changing their connotation completely. God, creation, love, freedom, eternity and many other terms utterly change their meaning, and this only because Spinoza tried to use them more consistently than his predecessors. Our first step therefore has been to approach Spinoza with the perspective of absolutism.

It would be mere monism to assert that the world has come out of one universal substance, but it would be

Absolutism to hold that the world is a mere appearance whose underlying reality is the self-conceived or the Absolute. It cannot be doubted that Spinoza relegated the phenomena to the realm of imagination and opinion and accepted the absolutely infinite alone as real. All determination being negation, the Absolute is utterly indeterminate and can be characterised only negatively. The ontological implication is that the Absolute must be regarded as pure being (without any element of negation in it) as the only being, or non-dual and universal being. Epistemologically, the absolute cannot be known in a relational manner ; it must be self-conceived or self-intuited. It is evident how near the Spinozistic conception of substance is to the Vedāntic Brahman.

Being absolutely indeterminate in itself, substance is nevertheless conceived in ever so many ways by the intellect. These ascriptions of the intellect are called Attributes by Spinoza. The Attributes can only be regarded as subjective; otherwise the unity, the simplicity and the indeterminateness of Substance would be jeopardized. Moreover, the infinity of the number of Attributes, their nature as *relatively* infinite and their parallelism can fit in with the subjective interpretation only. The Attributes of Substance should not be confused with the properties of substance. While the former correspond to the *taṣasthala lakṣaṇa* of Brahman the latter may be regarded as the *svarūpa lakṣaṇa* ; the former are only *upādhis*, but the latter are essential characteristics.

Spinoza is emphatic that one substance cannot produce another and also that nothing can come out of nothing. Still if we perceive change and causation in the world it is only the fault of our vision ; all change is mere appearance. God is no doubt the cause of the world

as nothing else can be the cause, but at the same time God is the absolute, perfect and pure being. Spinoza is anxious to point out that we should admit nothing which threatens the unity and the indivisibility of God. That is to say that divine causation should not be regarded as real transformation, but only as appearance or *vivarta*. Spinoza points out that the alternative attempt to keep in tact the unity and the indivisibility of God by accepting transeunt causality is but futile ; because so long as the effect is regarded as real it cannot but affect the cause. It is therefore more reasonable to believe that God being at once immanent and transcendent is both the material as well as the efficient cause of the world but in a specific sense. Being indeterminate, God is transcendent; but He is also immanent, being the sole reality of all that appears.

The absolute is the free cause of the world ; but freedom must not be mistaken for free will. God is free only in the sense that there is nothing else to condition or determine His creation. Freedom of will or the capacity to waver is an imperfection. This is why Spinoza denies teleology also. Further, he denies the freedom of will in man too, because that would militate against the necessary creation or the universal causation of God. A mode cannot be free. Freedom of will and teleology may be accommodated in Theology but not in Philosophy. Philosophy cannot look upon God as man.

The purpose of introducing the conception of Attributes in the philosophy of Spinoza is the same as that of *Īvara* in the Vedānta. *Kūṣastha* Brahman or the absolutely indeterminate substance cannot be conceived as the cause of the world ; a dynamic principle is needed. The self-differenting principle cannot be the Absolute

as it has the element of negation in it, and the Absolute cannot be self-differentiating as it is indeterminate. A compromise is struck by accepting the penultimate or the *Īvara* as dynamic. Substance and *Natura Naturans* are related in the same way as Brahman and *Īvara*; the two are two only connotatively, but one denotatively. Minor issues regarding the Attributes should not be allowed to interfere with the general trend of Spinoza's thought.

The very fact that Spinoza admits intermediaries between Substance and modes indicates that he would not regard them as parts or transformations of substance. Modes follow from God necessarily and God is the cause of their essence and existence. Still their essence does not involve existence because they are directly related to the Attributes and not to Substance as such. To the extent modes are finite and negative or conditioned, they are unreal; but they are not like the sky-flower. The positive element in modes belongs to Substance which is their inner ground.

As a mode, man has in his constitution two attributes of God, namely, thought and extension, mind and body. The human mind is the idea of its body; it is neither a mere mental state nor a bundle of capacities but ever an actual idea of its body. Being modes of Attributes that belong to one and the same Substance, the mind and the body show a kind of correspondence; but they are so exclusive of each other that there can be no interaction. There is an appearance of the freedom of will in man which he seems to exercise in moving his limbs or in the acts of assertion and denial; but this is just an appearance due to our ignorance of true causes.

Spinoza's theory of knowledge is closely related to his metaphysics and ethics. For him truth is self-evident, it needs no sign. If truth were not self-evident, nothing else could make it evident ; one would be involved in an infinite regress. But falsity cannot be self-evident otherwise, there would be no deception or illusion. Falsity is due to privation of knowledge or ignorance, and is therefore cancelled when knowledge arises.

Spinoza recognises three grades of knowledge. All that we believe uncritically comes under opinion and imagination ; all empirical knowledge is of this type. Reason is a higher type of knowledge, it enables us to analyse our passions and to live the life of virtue. Virtue according to Spinoza is not mere practice of certain rules of conduct ; it is *real* self-love. The principle of *conatus* on which self-love is based is misguided in ignorant men ; because the *conatus* or the urge for self-preservation is nothing but the urge to infinity or eternity in disguise. It is this urge that leads us on from false self-love to real self-love or love of the real self. Self-love therefore should not be mistaken for selfishness or some kind of naturalism. The possibility of freedom or the practice of virtue is to be found in the principle of *conatus*. It should be borne in mind that virtue in the Spinozistic sense does not depend on free will but on knowledge, and so determinism cannot hamper us. In fact if determinism is once accepted, one is out of it forthwith. Reason helps us to realise this truth as it enables us to see things in reference to God.

The culmination of virtue based on reason is intuition. Perfect freedom comes only at the dawn of this third kind of knowledge. With the intuition of God there

wells up in us what Spinoza calls the intellectual love of God. Verily, this is a new birth ; it is awareness of a new dimension. Since our happiness depends upon the kind of object we love, and since the object of our love at this stage is God, our happiness knows no bounds.

Spinoza identifies self-love in the highest sense with the intellectual love of God. This shows that for him the real self of man is God, and intuition is nothing but the discovery of this real self. He uses the term 'love' which suggests the duality of the lover and the beloved. But as is clear from the nature of self-love, duality is not necessary for love ; in fact, duality may even indicate the lack of love. True love is true unity. If understood on these lines, Spinoza's love of God may closely correspond to the Vedāntic *Ātma-sākṣātkāra*. It is true that Spinoza does not make this aspect of his philosophy very clear, and nowhere speaks of the identity of the self and God. But he does talk of the eternity of the mind which is attained in our love of God. Since Spinoza does not admit any kind of duality and since he insists on the eternity of the mind at the same time, consistency demands that this eternity should be understood as the discovery of the fundamental identity of God and the self. It is also evident that Spinoza did not believe in individual immortality after death nor did he believe that we can enjoy our eternity only after death. In this way it is shown that the last word of Spinoza is not a contradiction of the first word (*Caird*, p. 301).

The philosophy of Spinoza can be made consistent neither "by eliminating the panthesitic element as mere scholastic surplusage" nor even by taking the help of the so-called more perfect logic, namely, the logic of identity-in-difference, and accommodating "the modern indivi-

dualism and empiricism" in the concept of the Absolute. It can be done only by admitting that an absolutism of the Advaitic type could appear even in the context of modern philosophy, if only on the pretext of reforming theism. While the western scholars and thinkers have to give up the habit of denouncing the philosophy of Pure Being and have to develop a sympathetic understanding of it, the Indian thinkers have to bear in mind that the Advaitism of the western brand cannot, as it is a product of different spiritual climate, be wholly identical with our Advaitism. A comparative study of the different religions and philosophies will have served its purpose if it succeeds in broadening our outlook and deepening our sympathies, particularly at a time when the world is shrinking into a unity.





GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT TERMS

<i>abbāva</i>	.. absence, negation.
<i>abbhiniveṣa</i>	.. fear of death or the desire to live.
<i>abbivṛyakti</i>	.. manifestation, expression.
<i>adbikāri</i>	.. deserving or qualified person.
<i>adbikāri-bbēda</i>	.. difference in persons based on fitness or or qualification
<i>adbikari-vāda</i>	.. the doctrine that believes that knowledge can be imparted only to the select and fit persons.
<i>adhiṣṭhāna</i>	.. ground, sub-stratum.
<i>adhyātma vidyā</i>	.. spiritual knowledge or self-knowledge, philosophy
<i>advitiya</i>	.. non-dual, unequalled.
<i>āham brahmāsmi</i>	I am <i>brahman</i> .
<i>ahaṅkāra</i>	.. ego.
<i>anādi</i>	.. beginningless.
<i>ānanda</i>	.. joy, bliss.
<i>antahkaraṇa</i>	.. the inner organ of cognition.
<i>aparokṣa</i>	.. direct, literally, not indirect.
<i>ārambhavāda</i>	.. the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory of the prior non-existence of the effect.
<i>ārta</i>	.. helpless, aware of one's impotence.
<i>arthārthi</i>	.. desirous of gain or enjoyment.
<i>asat-kāryavāda</i>	.. same as <i>ārambha-vāda</i> .
<i>ātman</i>	.. self.
<i>āvaraṇa lakṣi</i>	.. the power of obscuring.
<i>avedya</i>	.. unknowable.
<i>avyakta</i>	.. unmanifest.
<i>avyavahārya</i>	.. beyond empirical life or discourse.
<i>bādhā</i>	.. cancellation, negation.
<i>bhakta</i>	.. devotee.
<i>bbāvarūpa</i>	.. apparent being.
<i>bhokṛta</i>	.. the state or function of being an enjoyer.
<i>bhokṛtvābbhimāna</i>	.. the egoity of being an enjoyer.
<i>brahman</i>	.. absolute.
<i>buddhi</i>	.. intellect, mind, the cognitive faculty.
<i>caitanya</i>	.. consciousness.
<i>catuṣpāt</i>	.. four-footed.
<i>cit</i>	.. consciousness.
<i>citta</i>	.. mind, psychical mechanism.
<i>deśa</i>	.. space.
<i>dharma</i>	.. the qualified entity.
<i>draṣṭā</i>	.. the perceiver.
<i>drṣṭi</i>	.. view.
<i>dr̥ya</i>	.. the perceived, the object.
<i>dveṣa</i>	.. animus, aversion.

<i>eṣaṇās</i>	..	desires, fundamental desires.
<i>guṇas</i>	..	the three constituents of <i>prakṛti</i> .
<i>idantā</i>	..	thisness.
<i>īśvara</i>	..	Lord, God.
<i>jada</i>	..	inert.
<i>jāgrat</i>	..	waking life.
<i>jijñāsu</i>	..	the aspirant of knowledge.
<i>jīvanmukta</i>	..	one who has attained freedom even in this life.
<i>jīvanmukti</i>	..	the state of <i>jīvanmukta</i> .
<i>jñānī</i>	..	the knower, one who has realised truth.
<i>jñāna-śakti</i>	..	the power of knowledge.
<i>kāla</i>	..	time.
<i>kāraṇa-upādhi</i>	..	the fundamental or primary condition.
<i>kartr̥iva</i>	..	the quality of being a doer or agent.
<i>kārya-upādhi</i>	..	secondary condition.
<i>kriyāśakti</i>	..	the power of action.
<i>lokaiṣaṇā</i>	..	the desire for fame.
<i>līlā</i>	..	sport.
<i>manana</i>	..	thinking.
<i>manas</i>	..	inner sense.
<i>māyā</i>	..	appearance and the power which causes it.
<i>māyopabita</i>	..	associated with <i>māyā</i> .
<i>mumukṣutva</i>	..	earnest desire for attaining freedom.
<i>nāma</i>	..	name.
<i>neti neti</i>	..	not this, not this.
<i>nimitta</i>	..	efficient (cause).
<i>nirguṇa</i>	..	without or beyond determinations or qualities.
<i>nirvikalpa samādhi</i>	..	state of formless consciousness or concentration.
<i>nityānitya vastu-viveka</i>	..	discrimination of temporal and eternal things.
<i>parārthānumāna</i>	..	form of syllogism as presented to others according to the Nyāya.
<i>pariṇāma</i>	..	effect, transformation.
<i>pariṇāmayāda</i>	..	the Sāṃkhya doctrine of real transformation.
<i>pārmārthika</i>	..	the ultimate, the ideal.
<i>prakṛti</i>	..	the primordial matter of the Sāṃkhya.
<i>pramātṛ caitanya</i>	..	the cognitive consciousness, the knower or the subject.
<i>prātibhāsika</i>	..	the illusory objects of common experience.
<i>pratītyogī</i>	..	that from which a thing is said to be different; that of which there is absence or negation.
<i>puṇya</i>	..	pure consciousness, self.
<i>putraiṣaṇā</i>	..	desire for progeny.
<i>rāga</i>	..	attachment.
<i>ṛṣi</i>	..	seers.
<i>rūpa</i>	..	material form.
<i>saṅga brahman</i>	..	<i>īśvara</i> , <i>brahman</i> associated with <i>māyā</i> .
<i>sākṣād aparokṣāt</i>	..	unconditionally immediate.

<i>sākṣātkāra</i>	..	realisation, intuitive experience.
<i>sākṣī</i>	..	witness-consciousness.
<i>śakti</i>	..	power.
<i>śamadamādi sampat</i>		virtues of equipoise, self-control etc.
<i>śamavāya</i>	..	the Nyāya term for the relation called inherence.
<i>sāmyāvasthā</i>	..	the state of equilibrium (of <i>prakṛti</i>)
<i>sarvam duḥkham</i>	..	all is pain.
<i>sarvāntara</i>	..	underlying everything, inner essence.
<i>sat</i>	..	existent.
<i>satkāryavāda</i>	..	the Sāṃkhya doctrine of the prior existence and reality of the effect, identity of cause and effect.
<i>sāttvika</i>	..	constituted of <i>sattva</i> ; of superior virtue and wisdom.
<i>śvalakṣaṇa</i>	..	the unique, momentary, particular
<i>svapna</i>	..	dream.
<i>svārthānumāna</i>	..	literally, inference for oneself; the psychological process of inference.
<i>svārūpalakṣaṇa</i>	..	essential definition, or property.
<i>svārūpataḥ</i>	..	by nature, inherently.
<i>svataḥ siddha</i>	..	self-established.
<i>svayambhū</i>	..	<i>causa sui</i> .
<i>svayam jyotiḥ</i>	..	self-luminous;
<i>svayamprākāśa</i>	..	self-evident.
<i>taṭasthalakṣaṇa</i>	..	accidental property, definition <i>per accidens</i> .
<i>tattvamasi</i>	..	that thou art.
<i>trikālābādhitā</i>	..	not cancelled any time, past, present or future.
<i>npacāra</i>	..	of figurative or secondary import.
<i>npādāna</i>	..	material (cause).
<i>npādhi</i>	..	limiting condition.
<i>vairāgya</i>	..	renunciation.
<i>vastutva</i>	..	thinghood, reality.
<i>vidbhiniṣedha</i>	..	the 'oughts and the 'ought-nots', positive and negative injunctions.
<i>vikṣepaśakti</i>	..	the power of projection (of <i>avidyā</i>).
<i>viśaya caitanya</i>	..	consciousness in the form of objects.
<i>viśeṣa</i>	..	unique, the doctrine of ultimate distincts held by the Nyāya.
<i>vittaiṣaṇā</i>	..	the desire for property.
<i>vivarta</i>	..	illusory appearance.
<i>vivartavāda</i>	..	the doctrine that regards all change or manifestation as illusory.
<i>vṛtti</i>	..	mental modification.
<i>vyavahāra</i>	..	practical life, phenomenal existence.
<i>vyāvahārika</i>	..	of practical or empirical life.

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INDEX

- absolute, absolutism, (see under substance and God also), Spinoza's God as 65-66, definition of 69, types of 69-70, Spinozism as 70, Spinoza's absolutism compared to Vedāntism 71-72, contrasted with Hegel's 71-73, knowledge of 81-83, the Vedāntic conception of 102 ff, misinterpretations of Spinoza' 113 ff, causality of 122 ff, and phenomena 156-59, and *īvara* 186-87, *īvara* in 191-92, 194, intermediate causes in 202-4, and negation 215-16, love of 295, absorption in 312, Spinoza's 316 ff.
- acosmism, charge of 122, the charge answered 155-56.
- advaitism, advaitin, (see also under Vedānta and Vedāntism), self during sleep according to 103-4, identity and difference in 105, *māyā* and *līlā* in 149, the absolute and phenomena according to 156-58, *īvara* in 191, free will in 230-31, 322.
- Aeternitas*, Hallett's, (see abbreviations) 117n, 178n.
- agnosticism, 63, Vedāntic way of avoiding 83, infinite attributes and 166-67, 174-75.
- Ajñāna*, Murti's 190n, 214n.
- Alexander, S., (see abbreviations) his views regarding the preponderance of extension over thought 177-79, his *Spinoza and Time*, 177n, his view regarding time as an attribute 182-84, 182n.
- anthropomorphism, anthropomorphic, acceptable in religion 19, not acceptable in philosophy 25, criticism of 46-47, 227.
- Anti-Theistic Theories*, Flint's, 80n, 122n, 166n.
- appearance, attributes as 66, substance beyond 92, effect (the world) as 127-29, and the absolute 157-58, 317.
- ārambbvāda*, 123.
- Aristotle, Aristotelian, 50n, 151, 183.
- Arjuna, 256, 280.
- asatkāryavāda*, criticism of 123, 126.
- ātmā*, *ātman*, its identity with *brahman* 83, as *trikālābādhitā* 104., *antahkaraṇa* and 236, as dearest 284.
- atheism, atheist, Spinoza not an 42, definition of 43, 43n, 74, 75.
- attributes (of substance), 66, distinguished from properties of substance 88ff, compared to *upādhis* 89, 164, and the transcendence of substance 98-99, criticism of Martineau's view of 113-116, criticism of the view of substance as the totality of 117-21, are not

- effects 128, why introduced 154 ff, definition, nature and status of 160-65, criticism of the objective view of 165-72, parallelism of 172ff, the subjective view of 172-80, the problem of the preponderance of 177-80, whether time and eternity are 180-84, whether attributes dynamic 197ff, and infinite modes 201ff, interaction and exclusiveness of 231 ff, immortality and parallelism of 307, 317-19.
- Bacon, F., 57.
- Barker, H., 233n, 237n, 238n.
- Berkely, G., 231.
- Bible, 40n.
- Blyenbergh, W. v., 63, 133n, 275.
- bondage, not due to body 194, 306; the nature of 267, Caird's criticism of the Spinozistic conception of 268-70, possibility of freedom from 270ff, objections of Caird and Taylor to Spinoza's view of 273, 277.
- Bradley, A. C., his *Ideals of Religion* 43n.
- Bradley, F. H., 192n, criticism of his conception of personality 192-95.
- brahman, *brahma*, *saṁyama* 67, knowledge of 82-83, also 243, *saarūpalakṣaṇa* of 88ff, *taṭasthalakṣaṇa* or *upādhis* of 89, as transcendent and immanent 95-96, the Vedāntic conception of 102-9, as pure being 112, and creation 122-23 and cosmos 157-58, attributes as *upādhis* of 164, the infinity of 182, and *īśvara* 186-87, *sākṣāt-kāra* 249, identity of self with 305, 317-19.
- Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya*, Śaṅkara's (B. S. B.), 11, 11n, 75n, 122, 151n, 157n, 243n.
- Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (Br. Up.) 44n, 82n, 83n, 95n, 96n, 284n.
- Bruno, G., 51n, 53, 59.
- Buddha, 4, 148.
- Buddhism, Buddhist, 7n, conception of *śvalakṣaṇa* 110, conception of cause and effect 123, 126, 230, 276.
- Cabbala, Cabbalistic, influence on Spinoza 51-52.
- Caird, J., (see abbreviations) consideration of his criticism of the geometrical method 29-33, 37, 39, regarding influences on Spinoza 50, 51, 53, 54; his view of attributes 155, his criticism of infinite attributes 175-76, concerning the preponderance of thought 177, his criticism of immediate infinite modes 203ff, his criticism of Spinoza's view of divine causality 204-6, regarding partial unreality of modes 212, regarding the place of negation 215-16, his view of *idea-ideae* 237-38, consideration of his criticism of Spinoza's conception of freedom and bondage 267-71, 313; his criticism of Spinoza's view of survival considered 306-9, 321.
- Camerer, 311.
- Cartesian, Cartesianism, 39n, 48, influence on Spinoza (different views) 53-54, criticism of 54-58, its possible influence on Spinoza

- 58-59, method 74-75, substances degraded to attributes 113-14, 170 ; 313.
- causa sui*, 71, significance of 100, criticism of Martineau's view of 101, 147.
- Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, Murti's, 215n.
- Cbāndogya Upaniṣad*, 95n, 112n.
- Christ, 148.
- Christian, Christianity, 2, immortality in 67, 68, 101 ; freedom in 194, intermediate causes in 202, 219, 271n.
- Cogitata* (see abbreviations), 109n, 137n, 138n, 154n, 163, 183n, 184n, 239, 239n, 240n, 241, 274n.
- coherence-theory, 239.
- conatus*, its meaning and significance 210-11, Martineau's criticism of 214-15, and virtue 258-59, 261 ; Caird's view of 268-69, and love of God 301ff, 320.
- Correspondence*, (see abbreviations), 13n, 16n, 19n, 26n, 37n, 42n, 43n, 46n, 55n, 57n, 63n, 71n, 79n, 84n, 88n-92n, 99n, 100n, 115n, 128n, 133n, 135n, 142n, 147n, 149n, 150n, 160n, 162n, 169n, 171n, 176n, 181n, 183n, 184n, 201n, 219n, 240n, 248n, 272n, 275n, 276n, 284n.
- correspondence-theory of truth, 233ff, 239.
- creation, Maimonides view of 49, Cartesian view of 57-58, Spinoza regarding 66, 70, as central problem of Spinozism 94, absolute 101, 114, the problem of 122-23, demiurgic 132, necessary (denial of design in) 140, meaning of free (*lilā*) 147-50, evil in 147-50, controversy about Spinoza's view of 151-52, its place in the absolute 156-57, intermediate causes and 202-3, 316, 318.
- Cresca, 47, 48, his *Critique of Aristotle* 50n.
- Critique of Aristotle*, Crescas' 50n.
- Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant's, 3n.
- Dawes Hicks, G., 214n.
- deist, 15.
- demiurgic, 94, 132.
- Descartes, 2, 26, 32, 41, 48, 51n, Spinoza and 53-59, Spinoza's criticism of 57, 60, 64, his method of philosophy 74-75, his view of created substance 92, 222, 227, Spinoza's criticism of his view of the relation of mind and body 232, 314, 316.
- determinism, (see also under necessity), 50, 59, 62, 228, in Vedānta 230-31, 261, Spinoza's determinism 271-76, criticism of 273, and morality 275-76, 320.
- De Vries, S. J., 115, 161.
- dialectic, dialectical, Hegel's emphasis on 37-39, type of absolutism 69, 72, 102, of Vedānta 109ff.
- Discourse on Method*, Descartes', 56n, 74, 74n.
- duration, Spinoza's view of 183-84, of mind 291, 309-11.
- east, eastern, 105, 313.
- ego, egoity, as relative 72, 112, distinguished from self 104, as basis of all distinctions 106, expansion and annihilation of 148, in knowledge 190-91, as

- source of imperfection 194-95, as basis of the distinction between existent and non-existent 213, utility of 216, 245, and morality 274, 312.
- emanationism, emanationist, accepted by Cabbalists 51, and Spinozism compared and contrasted 202.
- Emendations* (see abbreviations), 2, 4, 5n, 6n, 8n, 9n, 10n, 26, 27, 27n, 45, 45n, 54, 79n, 88n, 101n, 137n, 147n, 155n, 178n, 179n, 180n, 240, 240n, 241, 241n, 246n, 247, 247n, 248n, 250, 250n, 251n.
- emotion, analysis of 254-60, definition of 257, kinds of 259, laws of 260ff, active 262ff, strength of 264ff, control of 277-81, 282, undesirable 287-293.
- Erdmann, J. W., his *History of Philosophy* 32n, his view of attributes 163, Martineau's criticism of 168, 196n.
- Essay on Pantheism*, Hunt's. 203n.
- Essays on Truth and Reality*, Bradley's, 192n.
- eternity, 67, of mind 83, 303-8 God's decrees and 137, whether an attribute of God 180ff, infinite time and 182-83, Spinoza's conception of 183, *conatus* and 211, 320, intuition and 248-50, 262, 281, 262, 281, of man 291ff, personal immortality inconsistent with 311-12.
- Ethics* (see abbreviations), quoted practically on every page.
- ethics, 50, in Western thought 64, freedom as postulate of 225-26, as organic to Spinozism 320.
- Europe, European, (see also under West), freedom of thought in 68, typical interpretations of substance in 96-97, obsessed with morality 142.
- evil, and the immanence of God 133ff, significance of regarding the world as 148, Spinoza's view of 149-50, 231, emotion and knowledge of 266, and necessity 272, 276.
- evolution, its place in metaphysics 38, 38n, 77, and Spinozism 199, of modes 200ff, 204.
- extension (as an attribute of substance), Crescas' view of 50, Wolfson's view of 63, Spinoza's view of 66, Martineau's view of 113-114, Hallett's view of thought and 117-18, Pollock's view of 119-21, and thought not substances 128, objections against it as an attribute 133, and thought not effects 159, preponderance of thought over 168, 177ff, 308; the status of thought and 170, 176, meaning of parallelism of thought and 172-74, time in relation to thought and 182, its modes in relation to thought-modes 217-18, 256, 310.
- faith, in the power of knowledge 12, and philosophy 13-26, 49, 141, 227, analysis of Spinoza's personality and 40-47 necessary for knowledge 86, in the reality of the world 244, 315.

- falsity, (see also under illusion and illusory) and reality 103ff, of appearance 157, not self-evident 241, the Vedāntic view of truth and 242-43, 308, 315.
- fatalism, 273n.
- Fichte, J. G., 39.
- finite, and the absolute 65, not self-evident 77-78, as dependent 87, substance as transcending 94-95, 97, finite as condition of 130-31, number of attributes not 175, and infinite 181-82, 302, God infinite or 192-95, modes and their status 198-99, 211-16, nature of finite modes 208-11, and love of infinite 296-97, 312-13.
- finitude, not self-evident 77, the finite as bereft of 212-13, 215; bondage and 268, knowledge and 294.
- Flint, R., his *Anti-theistic Theories* 80n, his view regarding intuition of God 81-82, his *Theism* 82n, his view of Spinoza's monism 122n.
- freedom, as ideal 4, possible only by knowledge 12, as essence of spiritual life 13, 15, of reason 18, 50, Caird's view of the denial of 33, and the geometrical method 34-35, from desire 42-45, Descartes' view of 56-57, denial of 60-61, of thought 68, of God denied 136, its implications 139, real meaning of God's 146-50, possible in the present life 194, of will (consideration of arguments for) 225-30, as spiritual goal 252ff, Spinoza's conception of 245, 267ff, the possibility of 270ff, 277, law and 289, from bondage 303ff, and individuality 310-13, 318.
- Froude, J. A., his *Short Studies on Great Subjects* 86n.
- geometrical method, the criticism of 22ff, the significance of 33ff, and emotions 255, 315.
- Gibson, A. B., 56, his *Philosophy of Descartes* 56n.
- Gilson, E., his *God and Philosophy* 64n.
- Gītā Bhagavad*, its conception of the ideal 10n, its catholicity 14n, 23n, view of the path of philosophy 25n, view of faith 40, 40n, 41, 41n, qualities of a spiritual man according to 43, 43n, transcendence of *brahman* according to 95-96, 95n, 96n, 143n, 256n, 262, and necessity 276, 276n, prescription for self-control 281, 281n, 286, apparent self-contradiction in 302-3, 303n, 311, 311n.
- God (see also under substance and absolute), and Mammon 8, as central truth 9-10, religion as obedience to 14-16, religion and the concept of 19-22, 26, 314-15, 26, and the philosophic perspective 27-28, Spinoza on 42-43, 78-84, Spinoza's love of 46-47, Maimonides' view of 49-50, Bruno's view of 53, Descartes' view of 54-56, Spinoza and Descartes' view of 57-59, Wolfson's view of Spinoza's conception of 60-62, criticism

of that view of 62-63, as absolute 65-67, Hegelianism and Spinoza's view of 73, philosophy and intuition of 76-77, self-evidence and knowledge of 80-82, Spinoza's view compared with the Upaniṣadic view of 82-83, proofs for God's existence (their utility) 84-86, nature of proofs for 86-88, distinction between attributes and properties of 88-90, deduction of the properties of 90-94, transcendence of 94-96, as pure being 97-102, Martineau's view of the attributes of 113-16, Hallett's view of the attributes of 116-18, Pollock's view of 119-21, *vivartavāda* and 127-28, Spinoza's view of the causality of 129-31, as immanent cause 132-35, denial of will in 135-40, criticism of the anthropomorphic conception of 141-42, criticism of teleological creation of 142-45, the meaning of the freedom of 146-50, as conscious cause 151-53, the status of the attributes of 161-63, infinite attributes of 174-76, eternity as an attribute of 180-84, as *Natura-Naturans* compared to *īśvara* 186-88, Vedāntic arguments for 191, the personality of (Bradley's argument) 192-95, evolution of modes from 200-4, 209-10, 211-13, Sons of 203-4, status of man and 219, human freedom and 226-27, *sākeśī* and 237,

liberation and knowledge of 24-45, rational knowledge of 248, intuitive knowledge of 249-51, freedom belongs only to 270, possibility of freedom and knowledge of 271-75, emotions and 281, virtue and 285, love of (its genesis) 292-94, objections against Spinoza's view of the love of 294-96, characteristics of the love of 296-98, controversy over Spinoza's view of the love of 299-300, apparent inconsistencies in Spinoza's conception of the love of 300-3, effect of the love of 304-6, the relation of the freed soul to 309-13.

God and Philosophy, Gilson's, 64n.

good, philosophy as a discipline for the attainment of the supreme 38-39, 64, and bad as relative 134, 254-82, the world as 147-49, infinite and eternal 252-53, emotion and knowledge of 266, bondage and knowledge of good and evil 270-71, as self-preservation and selfishness 285, 289, the spiritual 296, love of God as eternal 298.

Gospel of Sri Ram Krishna, 150n.

Greek, 52, 52n.

Green, T. H. 226.

Guénon, R., for his *Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines* 38n, 141n, 142n.

Haldane, E. S., 30n.

Hallett, H. F., 36, 39, his view of substance and its attributes 116-18, 207n.

Hampshire, S., 239n, 285n, 286n.

Hebrew, 30, 32, 47, 51n.

Hegel, G. W. F., his view of the geometrical method 30, 37n, and the dialectical movement 38, 39, Spinoza and Hegel's logic of identity-in-difference 72, criticism of 105, 106, 122n, 155n.

Hegelian, Hegelianism, 33, emphasis on the dialectical movement of thought (criticism) 36-39, absolute 64, logic of identity-in-difference 72-73, 97, view of difference 10-11, 184, negation in 215, view of *idea-ideae*, 237-313.

Heidelberg, 44.

Hindu, Hinduism, fear of future in 7n, 17, 38n, view of bondage 271, and doctrine of *karma* 276.

History of Philosophy The, Hegel's 30n, 122n, 155n; Erdmann's 23n, 163n, 197n, Ueberweg's 100n.

Höfding, H., 208n.

Hound of Heaven The, Thompson's, 8n.

Hudde, J. 89.

Hume, Humean, 220, 237, 238.

Hunt, D. D., 203n.

idea, ideas, of God as central 9, 64, of God and other ideas 27-28, Cartesian conception of true 55, general idea of God not possible 71, 81; of God and His existence 86-88, criticism of Spinoza regarding deducing all ideas from one 155-56, of non-existent modes 213, mind as 220-24, Green's view of self as witness of 226,

affirmation not separate from the perception of 229, of external objects 233-34, of mind 235, *idea-ideae* and other 238, Spinoza's view of true and false 238-40, clear idea of God 249, and emotion 257-59, active emotions and 262, 281.

Idea of the Holy, Otto's, 21n.

idea-ideae, and the preponderance of thought 177-79, its nature 235ff, compared with the self-evidence of *veritas* 237, various views of 237, 238.

idealist, idealism, like realists 113, in Spinoza 177-78.

Ideals of Religion, A. C. Bradley's, 43n.

illusion, illusory, 66, the world as illusory in absolutism 69-as beginningless 101, effect or change as 123, 127; imperfections of the world as 150-51, why necessary to regard the world as 156-57, 159, cosmic and individual 188-89 modes as 207, and self-validity of knowledge 243, of freewill 274-75, pleasure due to 278, 70, cancellation of 306.

imagination, world as 66, 70, 128, 129, 317, extension from the standpoint of 133, teleology based on 145, time as aid to 159, 184, Spinoza's view of 244-47, knowledge of truth and 264, life at the level of 292, differences due to 301, after freedom 304-5, 307, and our eternity 310-11.

immortality, consideration of Wolfson's view of 62-63, in

- semitic religions and Spinoza 67, comparison of Spinozism and Vedāntism regarding 305, consideration of criticisms of Spinoza's view of 307-9, whether individual or not 309-13, 321.
- imperfection, teleology and 93, and God 150, *māyā* and 187, nature of 194-5.
- individuation, the problem of 204-8.
- India, Indian, (see also under East) 7n, *adbikārivāda* in 11, value of celibacy in 44, the distinction of the *vyāvahārika* and the *pāramārthika* in 276, view of spiritual progress and its effect on the body 293, 322.
- Indian Philosophy*, Radhakrishnan's 3n.
- infinite, infinity, pleasures cannot be 5, joy as the aim of philosophy 7, 9, 13-45, and the geometrical method 32-33, the problem of finite and (in Descartes) 58, Spinoza's view of substance as 61-63, 65-66, 73, as independent 77-78, proof of God from infinite power 86-88, God absolutely 92-93, 98, mind and matter as relatively 97, 99, attributes (Martineau's view) 115-16, (other views) 117-21, (our view) 161-62, (and parallelism) 167, 173, (other problems) 173-75; as the condition of finite 130-31, extension as 133, comparative infinity of thought and extension 178-79, kinds of infinite and the infinity of time 180-84, problems of infinite personality 192-95, modes (mediate and immed-
iate) 200-3, modes and finite modes 204-9, intellect 213, negation and 215-16, intellect and will 229, series of ideas 235, intellect and *sākṣī* 237, knowledge of the infinite essence of God 248, 250, spirituality as vision of 275, and the finite 296-99, human love and infinite love of God 300-2, ideal of absorption in the 312-13.
- intellect, and will in Descartes 56-58, and attributes 89, 115, 160-62, 169-70, divine and human 98, divine intellect and will 136-39, in the definition of attribute 169-72, infinite 213, will and 229, 237, survival of the 309-10.
- interactionism, 231.
- Introduction to Philosophy*, Patrick's, 176n.
- Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics*, Shanks', 131n, 139n, 226n, 227n, 229n, 269n, 271n.
- Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines*, Guénon's, 38n, 141n, 142n.
- intuition, and the method of Spinozism, 27, 71, 76; of the infinite 77-8, of God 81-83, 85, and reason 86-87, 281, Spinoza's view of 249-50, and love of God 292, and the eternity of mind 293-94, 320-21.
- Islam, 67.
- Israel, 162.

Israelities, 76.

Īvara, and the synthesis of religion and philosophy 67, *Natura Naturans* and 184-86, *māyā* and 186-87, and *brahman* 186-87, 318-19, whether the concept superfluous 188-92, the personality of 192-96, 203, 204.

Jacob, 162.

Jacob Ostens, 42.

Jainism, 276.

Jehovah, 76.

Jewish, church and Spinoza 44, 48, 51n, essential attributes of God in Jewish philosophy 171, 316.

jīvanmukṣa, *jīvanmukṣi*, Spinoza as 42, and the illusoriness of the world 189, the Vedāntic conception of 194, 311.

Joachim, H. H., (see abbreviations) consideration of his view of the geometrical method 32-33, 113, his view of attributes 155, 161, 167; his view of infinite attributes 174n, his view regarding the preponderance of thought over extension 177, his criticism of Spinoza's view of causality 204, 298n, his interpretation of Spinoza's conception of the eternity of mind 307.

Journal of Philosophy, (for Wolfson's article) 167n, (for Ratner's article) 198n, 208n.

Judaism, Spinoza and 48, and immortality 67.

judgment, the Vedāntic view of 89, unity of disparate predicates in 116, conflicting judgments about the world

148, negative 215-16, and freedom of will 228-29, body as the standpoint of 253.

Kant, Kantian, his failure to find out the root of philosophic urge 3, influence of Empiricism and Rationalism on 39, Pollock regarding Spinoza and 165-6, and the distinction between phenomena and noumenon 171, and freedom of will 228-29, 229n, and good will 282-3.

Kaṭhapaniṣad, 11n, 82n, 95n.

karma, law of, 276.

Kenopaniṣad, 82n, 231n.

Kṛṣṇa, Lord, 280.

Lambart de Velthuyse, 42.

Latta, R., 30n, his criticism of the definition of substance, 80, 161n, 214n.

Leibniz, Leibnizian, Russell's remarks about 41n, his failure to distinguish philosophy and religion 64, 314, his confusion regarding the definition of substance 92, his view of the the indiscernibility of monads 110, Russell's criticism of 130n, the possible and the compossible in 138.

līlā, and *māyā* 149, evil in the world and 49-50.

Lotze, R. H., his view of self-consciousness 112n, his view of infinite personality and its relation to the finite 195.

love, of the eternal and infinite 9, of God according to Spinoza 10, 52, 152, 248n, 249, 281, 291, of God (its

- genesis) 292-98, consideration of the criticisms of Spinoza's view of 294-96, its characteristics 296-303, meaning of intellectual 298, different views of 299, of God and its relation to self-love 301-2, 321, effect of 304-5, meaning of unity in 307, 310, obedience to God and 15, nature of 19, 24, of truth (Spinoza's) 41, of God resulting in our view of the world as good 148, as *moda* 195, of the body (soul's) 221, definition of (Spinoza's) 260, of the free and the necessary 261, virtue as self-love 278, 320, of God as greatest counter-force against passion 281, man of reason and 287-88, of egoity in the west 312.
- man, human, the religious 21-22, contrast between religious man and philosopher 23-24, Spinoza as a spiritual 40-47, and divine nature 98, and teleology 142-46, and the personality of God 153, and *īvara* 195, the general nature of 217-20, his mind and body 220-25, denial of free will in 226-31, and levels of emotional life 262, and nature 264-65, nature of his bondage 267-70, possibility of his freedom 270-76, Spinoza's spiritual prescriptions for 280-81, self-love as the absolute virtue of 283-85, characteristics of virtuous 285-90, the eternity of 291-313, 319-21.
- Mādhyamika, 69, 70, 71.
- Mahābhārata*, 256n.
- Maimonides, M., his influence on Spinoza 47-50, 59, 151.
- Maitreyī, 11.
- Malebranche, N., 37n.
- Māndūkya-kārikā*, 103n, 147n, 158n, 188n.
- Māndūkya Upaniṣad*, 82n, 105n.
- Martineau, J., (see abbreviations) 31n, 41n, 63, his view of Cartesian influence on Spinoza 59, 87n, his criticism of the definition of substance 91, 95n, his view of *causa sui* 100-1, consideration of his view of substance and attributes, 113-16, 151, his view of attributes considered 167-70, 178n, 205n, his criticism of *conatus* 214, his view of free will 227-28, regarding *idea-ideae* 237, regarding intellectual love 298-300, 302, regarding immortality in Spinoza 310-12.
- materialist, materialism, and atheism 43, and Spinozism 177, Spinoza neither an idealist nor a 178, Spinoza not a 230.
- matter (see also under extension), not an emanation according to Spinoza 52, 114, Cartesian view of mind and 56-58, Spinoza establishes homogeneity of 60, and thought only relatively infinite 97, criticism of the view of matter as an emanation or as an independent substance 132, thought and extension are

- both 176, bondage as identification with 194, Spinozism and emanationism regarding 202, 205.
- māyā*, as beginningless 101, and *līlā* 149-50, as *upādhi* of *Īvara* 158, as *kāraṇa upādhi* 164, 185, its nature and relation to *Īvara* 186-88, 195, 200, 305.
- māyāvāda*, and Spinozism compared 159, 185.
- medieval-times, middle ages, reason in 1, sentimentalism in 68, Spinoza and definition of substance in 83, attributes of God, 129, 199n, view of immortality and Spinoza 309.
- Mediations*, Descartes', 54n, 74.
- Microcosmus*, Lotze's 112n, 195n.
- Mind*, (for Barker's articles) 166n, 233n, 237n, 238n; (for Halletr's articles) 39n, 207n; (for Latta's articles) 30n, 80n, 161n, 214n, (for Roth's articles) 54n, 58n, (for Taylor's articles) 234n, 237n, 254n, 273n, 275n, 310n,
- mind (see also under thought), philosophy as a natural disposition of 3, the natural tendency of 7, Cartesian view of 56-57, 59, as relatively infinite 97, European 142, attributes not of the empirical level of 164, habit of Western, 172, unable to know all attributes of God 175, world not in the individual 189, *conatus* in reference to 211, and negation 215, the human 215-51, its definition and relation to body 220-25, and free will 225-31, comparison with the *antahkaraṇa* 230-31, denial of interaction between body and 231-34, idea of (*idea-ideae*) 235-38, imagination and 244-47, and *scientia intuitiva* 249-50, and body 256-58, passions and power of 279-81, its intuition and love of God 292-96, its identity with substance 301, the eternity of 303-9, objections to the doctrine of the survival of 307-10, the nature of surviving element of 309-13, 321.
- mode, modes, its contrast with substance 81, compared to *kārya-upādhi* 164, of thought and extension 177-79, and infinity 181, time as relative to 183-84, the status of 198-200, 211-16, the evolution of 200-4, infinite 201-3, relation of finite and infinite 205-8, the nature of 208-11, 217, the dual nature of 268-76, mind and body as 307-8.
- modern, lack of faith 12, era and philosophy 26, 37n, era and freedom of thought 68, 121, theories of evolution and Spinozism 199.
- monad, 78n, inconsistency in the conception of 92, 110, possible and compossible 138-39, and modes of Spinoza, 214.
- monism, monistic, Spinoza's 54, absolutism not mere 69, Spinozism not mere 70, 96, Spinoza's conversion of dualism into 113, 316.
- morality, and the religious man 23, and freedom 228-29, Spino-

zism and social 263-64, determinism and 271-72, spirituality and 274-76, 228.

• *Mundaka Upaniṣad* (Mund. Up.) 76, 76n.

Murti, T. R. V., 89n, 102, his *Ajñāna* 190n, 219n, his *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* 215.

Myers, H. A., his *Spinoza-Hegel Paradox* 72n.

Naciketā, 11.

Nyāya, Naiyāyika, *parārtbhānumāna* and Spinoza's method of presentation 35, conception of *viśeṣa* 110, doctrine of *asatkāryavāda* 123-24, 126.

naturalism, 40, Spinoza's doctrine of self-love not 284, 320.

natura naturans, 152, and *īvara* 184-88, 192, as creative 204, 319
natura naturata, 152.

nature, of philosophic awakening 3-6, of love 19, 148, Spinoza and unity of 60, 62, priority to the study of divine 77, sentimental views of 144, Spinoza's attitude towards disorders of 149-50, why identified with God 186, man's place in 219, 255, 264, 267, Spinoza's conception of 230, laws of 232, consideration of the criticism of Caird regarding Spinoza's view of man's place in 268-70, and the possibility of freedom 272-73.

necessity, (see also under determinism), Spinoza's view of free 147, creation not blind 152, and the consciousness of it 266, morality and 272-74, and the rebellion against it 279-80, and

free will 274, our judgement of the world and the realisation of divine 287, 292.

negation, of the wordly and spirituality 8, the finite and absolute 65-66, and affirmation in absolutisms 69-70, determination as 72-73, the concept of substance and determination as 92, 154-57, *causa sui* not mere 100n, and in attributes 161, privation and 181-82, not in the absolute 203, 312-13, the finite not a complete 212, the place of 215-16, 268, 274, 297, in the state of freedom 312-13.

Neo-Hegelian, Neo-Hegelianism, (see also under Hegel, Hegelianism) 37, 113.

nihilism, 126.

Neo-Platonic, Neo Platonism, Spinoza and 51-52, 59, type of absolutism 69-71, 114, 244.

Nero, 134.

nominalism, 50.

occasionalism, occasionalist, 232.

Oldenburg, H., 149

Otto, R., 21, 22n.

pantheism, Bruno's 53, 59, Spinozism not mere 68-69, 96, 130n, reconciliation of *māyā* and *līlā* in 150-51, Hunt's *Essay on Pantheism* 203n, 321, *Pantheism and the Value of Life*, Urquhart's, 6n.

parallelism (of attributes), Martineau's view of 168-69, subjective interpretation of attributes and 172-3, Alexander's view of 177n, reply to Martineau's criticism of 179, and survival 307, Caird's

- criticism of 308, reply to that criticism of 308-9, personal immortality and 310-311.
- pariṇāmavāda*, 125.
- pārmāthika*, and *vyāvahārika* view of causality 131-32, 188, 276.
- passions, the spiritual attitude towards 253-54, as confused idea 259, life of 262, the power of 265, bondage and the knowledge of 270, principles for the moderation of 278-79, love of God as the greatest antidote to 281, 292.
- Patriarch, 162.
- Patrick, G. T. W., his *Introduction to Philosophy* 176n.
- Paul, 135n, 222, 223.
- perfection, proof of God from His 86-87, of God and the denial of will 137-40, 146, of things not relative to human desires 149n, reason and 247-48, pleasure as transition to greater 259, not ideal but real 270, God as mind's 294.
- peripatetics, 99.
- personality, estimate of Spinoza's 40-47, of God (Wolfson's view) 151, 153, 299, of *Ivara*, 192-96, the survival of (Martineau's view) 311.
- pessimism, pessimist, disillusionment regarding worldly life is not 6n, Spinoza not 47, view of nature 144.
- Peter, 222, 223.
- phenomena, investigation of (Roth's view) 57, absolute as the ground of 65, only an appearance 66, absolutism and the rejection of 69, in order of study (according to Spinoza) 77, 315, even idealists accept the reality of 113, the problem of explaining 156, the distinction of noumenon and (not Kantian) 171, the attributes and 200, philosophy and 313.
- philosophy, philosophic, philosopher, consciousness 1-12, and religion 13-26, 141, 314-15, and its method 26-35, and History 36-40, 316, in the West 41, qualities of Spinoza as a 42, 46 Spinoza and Jewish 47-50, Spinoza and Descartes's 53-59, Spinoza's contribution to 63-67, Spinozism as an absolutist 68-73, 316-17, Spinoza's presentation of (its form) 73-78, and knowledge of God 84-85, creation as the crucial problem of 122, how to interpret Spinoza's 28-9, denial of teleology in 140-46, freedom and necessity in Spinoza's 146-47, and love of God 153 the charge of acosmism against Spinoza's 154-160, God as the governing concept in Spinoza's 9, 154, 172, the problem of individuation in Spinoza's 205, problem of freedom and 226-31, and our natural view of things, 244, sentimentalism a disqualification for 276, real and ideal identical in Spinoza's 284, the meaning of love of God in Spinoza's 297-300, reality of individual not admitted in 312-13, 321-22.

- Philosophy of Descartes*, Gibson's, 56n.
- Philosophy of Leibniz*, Russell's 41n, 78n, 130n, 139n.
- Philosophy of Religion*, Otto's, 22n.
- Philosophical Quarterly*, 89n.
- Plato, Platonic, Platonism, 40, Spinoza critical of 52, Spinoza's conception of eternity is 183, his conception of bondage and freedom 245, 307.
- pleasure, the philosopher's attitude to 5-8, philosopher's attitude contrasted with the religious man's attitude to 20-21, as primary emotion 259-60, as the essence of love 260, active emotions alone from 263, morality and 278, love of God and 281, 291, life of virtue and 286, of knowing God and pain 297-98.
- Plotinus, his cathartic virtues 11, 40.
- Pollock, Sir, F., (see abbreviations) 51, regarding cabbalistic influence on Spinoza 52, 52n, regarding Cartesian influence on Spinoza 53, 53n, 59n 113, regarding Spinoza's conception of God 119-20, regarding the subjective interpretation of attributes 165-66, regarding the meaning of infinite attributes 173, criticism of 174, regarding the preponderance of thought over extension 177, 178, 198, his view of *idea Dei* and *facies totius universi* 201n, 221n, concerning free will 228, 228n, 273n.
- positivism, 2, Spinoza's conception of self-love distinguished from 284.
- possible (and the actual), Spinoza's conception of 120, 138-39, 147, 213-14.
- pragmatism, 2.
- prakṛti*, the causality of 125, 132.
- prātibhāsika*, as distinguished from the *vyāvahārika*, 188-89, 181,
- Pre-Kantian, 168, 171.
- Proceedings of Aristotelian Society*, (P. A. S.) (for Wolf's articles) 116n, 117n, 169n, 173n, 174n, 197-8-n; (for Dawes Hick's article) 214n.
- prophets, their authority distinguished from philosopher's 18-19, 287.
- providence, 271n.
- puṇya*, 82, relation of *prakṛti* to 125, 132.
- Rabbis, 35, 49.
- Radhakrishnan, S., 3n.
- RamaKrishna Sri, 150n.
- rationalism, rationalist, 1, 39, 42, Spinoza and Jewish 47-50, 58, 316.
- Ratner, J., his view of the unity of substance 166n, 167n, 198, 198n, his view concerning mode 208n.
- real, reality, philosopher's attitude to 24-25, of the world (Descartes' view) 55, attributes not 63, God as absolute 65-66, in absolutism 69-70, consideration of Hegel's view of 72-73, substance as sole 92-93, according to the Vedānta 103-9, and change 125-27, of modes 212, in absolutism 317.

- reason, in medieval times 1-2, and philosophic urge 3, and revelation 15-19, for rejecting immanent causality (consideration of) 133-34, teleology not based on 142, whether God is cause or 197-98, and freedom of will 227, as the second kind of knowledge (according to Spinoza) 247-49, and intuition 250, and emotional life 262, 263, *conatus* and 268, bondage and 271, and control of emotion 279, 282, and virtue 285-90, and love of God 292.
- religion, religious, (see also under theology), philosophy and 13-26, 141-42, 314-15, Spinoza's life and 42-43, influence of our desires in 46-47, Spinoza and 62-63, the God of 192-93, freedom of will and 227, love of God in 295, and survival of mind 312-13.
- revelation, the value of 15, reason distinguished from 16-17, 23, 24, 49, *vidbinipadha* depends on 191, bondage known through 271.
- Roth, L., (see abbreviations) 14n, concerning Maimonides' influence on Spinoza 50, regarding the mystic element in Spinoza 51n, 53, concerning Cartesian influence on Spinoza 54, 57-58.
- Russell, B., his remarks about Leibniz 41n, 78n, concerning Spinoza and Leibniz regarding the concept of God 130n, 139n.
- Sāṃkhya*, view of identity and change (criticism) 105, criticism of *asatkāryavāda* 123-24, criticism of the *satkāryavāda* of 125, 132, 257.
- Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, 4n, 12.
- Śaṅkara, Śaṅkarite, (see also under Advaitism and Vedānta) view of *adbikārī* 11, 71, regarding knowledge of God 75, regarding the reality of the empirical world 103n, 105n, regarding the absolute as pure identity 112n, concerning purposeless creation 147n, 151, his denial of duality 157n, concerning cosmology 158n, on infinity 182, concerning freedom of will 231n, concerning knowledge of *brahman* 243.
- satkāryavāda*, criticism of 125, 127.
- Saunaka, 76.
- Schuller, G. H., 171n, 175.
- scientia intuitiva*, 71, Spinoza's view of 249-50.
- self, *brahman* as 82-83, 96, 102, during sleep 104, and self-consciousness 108-9, Lotze's view of the consciousness of 112n, *Ivara* and finite 193, nature of the bondage of 194, virtue and 277-78, absolute good and 282-83, virtue as preservation or love of 283-85, 320, love of God and 294-96.
- Selsam, Howard, 35n.
- semitic, 50n, 67, religions and freedom 194.
- Shanks, A., his '*An Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics*' 131n, 139n, 226n, 227n, 229n, 269n, 271n.

Short studies on Great Subjects
Froude's, 86n.

Short Treatise, (see abbreviations),
32, 76n, 101, 221n, 240,
241n, 245n, 248n, 249, 249n,
250, 251n, 294n, 302n, 303n,
304n, 305n

Sidgwick, H., 275n.

Sigwart, C., 59.

Simon de Vries, 44.

Simson, F. H., 30n.

solipsism, 55.

Spinoza, Spinozism, the spiritual awakening in 8-10, his view of religion and philosophy 14-19, the geometrical method of 26-35, the spiritual rank of 40-47, and the Jewish Rationalists 47-50, minor influences on 51-53, and Descartes 53-50, his originality 59-67, as absolutism 68-73, its form of presentation 73-78, his definition of substance 78-84, his proofs for God's existence 84-88, his view of the properties of God 88-90, his substance as transcendent 94-97 his substance as pure being 97-102, consideration of the misinterpretations of his substance 113-21, his view of divine causality 128-131, his view of God as immanent cause 132-35, his denial of will in God 135-40, his denial of teleology 140-146, his view of God's freedom 146-51, the significance of attributes in 154-60, his doctrine of attributes 160-65, objective interpretation of his doctrine

of attributes 165-72, the subjective interpretation of his attributes 172-80, his view of infinity 180-82, his view of eternity 183, comparison of his *Natura Naturans* with *Idvara* 185-88, dynamism of attributes in 197-200, his doctrine of modes (their evolution) 200-4, (their nature) 208-11, (their status) 211-16; the problem of individuation in 204-8, the nature of man according to 217-20, his conception of human mind and body 220-25, his denial of free will 225-31, his denial of interaction 231-34, his view of *idea-ideae* 235-38, his doctrine of truth and falsity 238-43, grades of knowledge in 243-51, his analysis of emotions and their laws 255-60, 260-64, his view of the strength of emotions 264-66, the nature of human bondage in 267-70, determinism and the possibility of freedom in 270-76, his view of the power of intellect 276-81, life of reason according to 281-90, his doctrine of the intellectual love of God (its genesis) 292-96, (its characteristics) 296-303, his conception of the eternity of mind 304-13.

Spinoza, Hampshire's, 239n, 285n, 286n.

Spinoza, Roth's, 50n, 51n.

Spinoza and Time, Alexander's, 177n, 182n.

Spinoza, Descartes and Maimonides, Roth's, 50n.

Spinoza-Hegel-Paradox, Myers', 72n.

Spinoza on God, Ratner's, 166n, 174n.

Study (Joachim's *A study of the Ethics of Spinoza*), 29n, 32n, 33n, 155n, 161n, 177n, 204n, 298n, 307n.

Study (Martineau's *A Study of Spinoza*), 91n, 95n, 100n, 101n, 113n, 116n, 167n, 168n, 169n, 170n, 299n.

Studies in the History of Ideas Vol. III, (for Howard Selsam's article) 35n.

substance (see also under God and absolute), the definition of 78-84, proofs for 84-88, properties of 88-90, deduction of the properties of 90-94, as transcendent 94-97, as pure being 97-102, misinterpretations of 113-121, and attributes 154-55, 159-65 unity of (Martineau's objections) 167-71, subjective interpretation of attributes and 172-80, whether time not an attribute of 180-84, in itself and as determined by attributes 185-86, attributes and creativity of 196-200, and modes 208-9, 212-1; mind identical with 301-2, eternity belongs not to mind but to its 308, 317-18.

Svetāśvara Upaniṣad (Sve.Up.) 82n.

Taittirīya Upaniṣad (Tait.Up.) 82n.

Taylor, A. E., his criticism of Spinoza's conception of mind 234, his interpretation of *idea-ideae* 237, his criticism of Spinoza's identification of the

good and the desired 254n, his criticism of Spinoza's determinism 273, his view of morality 275-76, his view of self-love 302, his view of immortality in Spinozism 310.

teleology, and the geometrical method 33-35, Spinoza's view regarding the basis of 46, Wolfson regarding Spinoza's denial of 60-61, Spinoza's denial of 140-46, acceptable in religion 227-325.

theism, theistic, not identical with religion 43, and Spinoza's absolutism 68-70, 316, and love of God 295.

Theism, Flint's 82n.

Theologico, (see abbreviations) 2n, 13, 13n-19n, 42, 49, 49n, 63, 75n, 135n.

theology (see also under religion and revelation) Descartes and 2, 54, and philosophy (Spinoza's view) 13, 16, 17, 49, 141-42, God in 26.

thought (as an attribute of substance), 63, and extension as unreal 66, and extension (Martineau's view) 113-16, 167-69, and extension are not effects 128, 170-71, and extension (their parallelism) 167-68, 172-73, and extension (not the only attributes) 174-75, and extension (both material) 176, its preponderance over extension 177-80, infinite understanding as immediate infinite mode of 201, and extension (denial of their interaction) 231-34, time, and eternity 180-84, criti-

- cism of Alexander's view of 182-83.
- transcendence, transcendent, of substance 94-97, does not exclude immanence 95, 147-193, not identical with transeunt 134-35, love of God and 295.
- transeunt, causality in Nyāya 123, causality in Sāṃkhya 125, causality and the relation of cause and effect 126-27, causality (its denial) 130, 132-35, 196.
- truth, in religion consistency not the mark of 141, of an idea 233-34, Spinoza's doctrine of 238-43, emotions and knowledge of 264.
- Types of Ethical Theory*, Martineau's, 31n, 41n, 59n, 87n, 113n, 152n, 167n, 168n, 169n, 178n, 205n, 214n, 227n, 228n, 298n, 299n, 300n, 302n, 319n, 311n, 312n.
- Tschirnhaus, E. W. v., 90.
- Ueberweg, F., 95n, his view of *causa sui* 100.
- unconditioned, phenomena and 156.
- unity, of universe (how Spinoza completes it) 60-61, of Spinoza's system 64, of substance 91-92, sleep experience and pure 108-9, and difference 111-12, Martineau's criticism of the unity of substance 113-16, 167-70, other views of the unity of substance 116-18, of substance and attributes 155-56 162-63, the ultimate reality as pure 158-59, Pollock's view of attributes and 165-67, of substance and parallelism of attributes 172-73, of God and self in love 295-96, 302, 307, consciousness of 306, with God 308, 311.
- unreal, pain must be 12, change (effect) must be 127, modes are 212, 215.
- Upadeśasāhasrī*, 304n.
- upādhi*, attributes compared to 89, 164, of *īvara* 158, 186, ego an 191 substance made dynamic with attributes as 199-200, 236.
- upanishad*, *upanishadic*, the absolute in 70-71, 74, the Vedāntic dependence on 76, and knowledge of absolute 82-83, apparently self-contradictory statements in 95-96, 186, self-love in 284, 301.
- Urquhart, W. S., 6n.
- Vacaspati Misra, 12.
- Van den Enden, 48.
- Vedānta, Vedāntism, Vedāntin, (see also under Śaṅkara and Advaitism), 52, 64, synthesis of philosophy and religion 66-67, 69, Spinoza's absolute and 73, 74, 317, and the purpose of philosophy 75-76, conception of *svarūpa lakṣaṇa* 88-89, conception of *brahman* 102-109, the dialectic of 109-12, solution of the problem of creation, 123, 158-59, *vivartavāda* of 126-127, 131, 154, and the *apriori* forms of the understanding 165, concept of *īvara* 185-86, 192-96, concept of *māyā*, 186-87, importance of the concept of *īvara* in 188-92,

- 318-19, conception of imperfection 194, intermediaries between Absolute and the world in 203, the illusory in 212, *sākṣi* in 213, 237, determinism in 230-31, and Spinozism (regarding conception of knowledge) 236-38, conception of truth and falsity 242-43, conception of *vyāvahārika* and Spinoza's view 244-45, reason and intuition compared to *manana* and *sākṣātkāra* of 248-49, Spinoza's view of mind and body compared to the concepts of *buddhi* and body of 257, regarding the utility of the false 273-74, Spinoza's doctrine of immortality compared with 305-6.
- Vedānta Paribhāṣā*, 89n, 158n, 242n, 246n.
- virtue, grades of knowledge and 262, determinism and 272, human nature and 277-78, life of 281-90, as selflove 283-84, 320.
- vīśeṣa*, 110.
- vivartavāda*, 52, *sātkāryavāda* leads to 126-27, Spinoza and 128-29, 185 significance of 156.
- Vyāsa, 4.
- vyāvahārika*, 132, 139, the distinction between *prātibhāsika* and 188-89, 191, 276.
- west, western*, (see also under European), 6n, 41, the concept of pure being and 96, 105, confusion of philosophy and religion in 142, 313, the conception of free creation (*līlā*) and 147, objective interpretation of attributes and 172, the concept of matter in 196, God and Godhead in 191, individuality and personality in 194, morality and spirituality in 274, 276 the ideal of absorption in the infinite and 312, 233.
- Whitehead, A. N., 77.
- will (freedom of), the geometrical method and 31-32, in Cartesianism 56-57, unity of nature and 60-61, and intellect in God 98, its denial in God 135-40, acceptable in religion 141, teleology and 145-46, *conatus* and 211, not a separate faculty 222, denial of 225-31, not necessary for assertion 229-30, 28-33, 9266; and the possibility of conversion 273-74, not necessary for spirituality 274-75, self-love and 302, freedom and free 318.
- Windleband, W., 197.
- Wolf, A., his view of Hegelian influence 37n, his view of Spinoza's indebtedness to Descartes 53, regarding Cartesianism 55, his view of Spinoza's substance 116-17, 169n, concerning parallelism 173, regarding infinity of attributes 173-74, 197, 198.
- Wolfson, H. A., (see abbreviations) 28n, 32n, regarding the use of the geometrical method 35, 35n, 36, regarding influences on Spinoza 50, 50n, 51, 53, his view of Spinoza's originality 60-63, 71n, regarding Spinoza's relation to

tradition 79, 79n 81n, 83, 83n, 84n, 86n, 94, 94n, concerning the meaning of *causa sui* 100n, 129, regarding God as a conscious cause 151, 151n, 153, 153n, 163n, 167n, regarding subjective interpretation of attributes 171, 171n, 172n, 176, 176n, 182n, 183n, 198n, 201n, regarding Spinozism

and emanationism 202, 202n, concerning the problem of individuation 205-6, 205n, 206n, 207n, 208, 234n, 261n, regarding love of God 299, 299n, 300, 302n, 305n, concerning hylic intellect 309, 310n, 311.

Yoga Sūtra, 5n.



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